

WJEC GCSE Religious Studies

Approved by Qualifications Wales

Guidance for Teaching: Unit 1

Teaching from 2025

For award from 2027



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Introduction

The WJEC GCSE Religious Studies has been approved by Qualifications Wales and is available to all centres in Wales. It will be awarded for the first time in Summer 2027, using grades A* to G.

Aims of the Guidance for Teaching

The principal aim of the Guidance for Teaching is to support teachers in the delivery of WJEC GCSE Religious Studies and to offer guidance on the requirements of the qualification and the assessment process. The Guidance for Teaching is **not intended as a comprehensive reference**, but as support for teachers to develop stimulating and exciting courses tailored to the needs and skills of their learners. The guide offers possible classroom activities and links to useful resources (including our own, freely available digital materials and some from external sources) to provide ideas for immersive and engaging lessons.

Additional ways that WJEC can offer support:

- sample assessment materials and mark schemes
- professional learning events
- examiners' reports on each unit
- direct access to the subject officer
- free online resources
- Exam Results Analysis
- Online Examination Review.

Qualification Structure

WJEC GCSE Religious Studies consists of 4 units. The qualification is unitised and does not contain tiering. Aside from Unit 1, which is an introductory unit, there is no hierarchy implied by the order in which the other units are presented.

	Unit title	Type of Assessment	Weighting
Unit 1	Religious and non-religious beliefs, teachings and practices	Written examination	30%
Unit 2	Religion and relationships	Non-examination assessment	20%
Unit 3	Roles, rights and responsibilities	Written examination	30%
Unit 4	Religion and human rights	Non-examination assessment	20%

Assessment

Summary of Assessment

Unit 1: Religious and non-religious beliefs, teachings and practices Written examination: 1 hour 15 minutes 30% of qualification	60 marks
Questions requiring objective responses, questions that require short and extended answers.	

The examinations for Units 1 and 3, will be available for the first time in summer 2026. The submission of Unit 2 will be available in spring 2026. The submission of Unit 4 will be available for the first time in summer 2027.

The first award of the qualification will be 2027.

Overview of Unit 1

Religious and non-religious beliefs, teachings and practices
(30% of the qualification)

The purpose of this unit is to:

- explore key diverse religious and non-religious beliefs, practices and worldviews
- develop understanding of key elements of religious studies to enable conceptual understanding of the nature of belief
- explore sources of authority and ethical systems that shape religious and non-religious perspectives towards morality
- understand how beliefs and teachings shape religious and non-religious views on identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, and belief in life after death.

The unit is divided into three parts:

- Christian perspectives or Catholic Christian perspectives
Choose **one** of the following options:
 - a – Christian perspectives
 - b – Catholic Christian perspectives
- World religion perspectives
Choose **one** of the following options:
 - a – Buddhist perspectives
 - b – Hindu perspectives
 - c – Islamic perspectives
 - d – Jewish perspectives
 - e – Sikh (Sikhi) perspectives
- Non-religious perspectives.

Non-religious beliefs can be assessed in isolation and/or in relation to the religions studied.

In this unit, learners will develop understanding in:	
1.1	Nature of Beliefs – (Christianity OR Catholic Christianity)
1.2	Beliefs – (Christianity OR Catholic Christianity)
1.3	Beliefs about Life and Death – (Christianity OR Catholic Christianity)
1.4	Religious beliefs in contemporary society – (Christianity OR Catholic Christianity)
1.5	Beliefs – (Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism – Centres choose one world religion)
1.6	Beliefs about life and death – (Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism – Centres choose one world religion)
1.7	Religious beliefs in contemporary society – (Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism – Centres choose one world religion)
1.8	Beliefs about life and death – non-religious beliefs
1.9	Non-religious beliefs in contemporary society

Unit 1 Assessment objectives and weightings

AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religious and non-religious beliefs, practices, and teachings	15%
AO2	Apply knowledge and understanding of religious and non-religious beliefs, teachings, practices, values, and philosophical convictions	8%
AO3	Analyse, evaluate, or make judgements on a variety of ethical and moral issues, religious and non-religious beliefs, teachings, practices, values, and philosophical convictions	7%

Unit 1 Teacher Guidance

1.1 Nature of Belief		
	Content Amplification	Teacher Guidance
1.1.1 Nature of belief	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What theists, monotheists, polytheists, religious pluralists and agnostics believe • Why some believe in a god or gods and identify as religious • What atheists and humanists believe • Why some people do not believe in a god or gods and identify as non-religious. 	<p>Belief is the conviction or acceptance that something is true, often without empirical evidence. In a religious context, belief refers to the acceptance of certain spiritual truths, teachings or principles, often centred around the existence of God or a divine being. Beliefs can shape how individuals perceive the world, their moral actions, and their understanding of life and death.</p> <p>Being a religious person usually involves the practice of rituals, participation in a faith community, and adherence to moral and ethical guidelines derived from the beliefs a person holds. It also includes living out those beliefs in daily life, through practices such as prayer, worship, charity, and observance of religious laws.</p> <p>Theist: a person who believes in the existence of a god or gods.</p> <p>Monotheists: Theists who believe in the existence of only one God, such as in Christianity, Islam, and Judaism.</p> <p>Polytheists: Theists who believe in the existence of multiple gods, as seen in religions like Hinduism (in some interpretations) and ancient Egyptian or Roman religions.</p> <p>Religious Pluralists: People who believe that multiple religions can offer valid paths to truth, spirituality, or salvation, and that no single religion has a monopoly on truth.</p> <p>Agnostics: Individuals who neither affirm nor deny the existence of God or gods, often believing that the existence of a divine being is unknowable or undecided.</p>

		<p>There are many different reasons why people believe in a god or gods. These may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personal encounters or feelings of spiritual connection to something greater than themselves.• They have been brought up in a religious environment where belief in God is part of tradition and identity.• Religion can provide answers to philosophical questions about purpose, morality and the afterlife.• Being part of a religious community or group offers support, shared values, and a sense of identity.• Faith in sacred texts and teachings, or belief in miracles and religious events, can strengthen a person's religious conviction.• Religions can offer a structured moral code, giving believers guidance on how to live ethically. <p>Atheists do not believe in the existence of any gods or divine beings. They often emphasise the importance of scientific inquiry and empirical evidence to understand the world. Atheists may reject religious beliefs as unsupported by reason or evidence, focusing instead on human experiences, values, and the material world.</p> <p>Humanists do not believe in any gods or divine beings. They emphasise the value of human beings and seek to promote human flourishing through reason, science, and ethical principles. Humanists typically believe that meaning, purpose and morality are derived from human experience and the development of society rather than religious sources. They advocate for compassion, justice and the well-being of others, often placing emphasis on individual responsibility and the betterment of humanity.</p>
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	<p>There are many different reasons why some people do not believe in a god or gods. These may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Many atheists seek empirical evidence for the existence of a higher or divine power and find that religious claims lack sufficient proof.• A reliance on reason, logic, and critical thinking leads some to conclude that belief in gods is inconsistent with what we understand about the natural world.• Scientific discoveries can provide explanations for phenomena traditionally attributed to divine forces, leading some to view religious beliefs as unnecessary or outdated.• Some doubt the existence of a god based on philosophical arguments, such as the problem of evil, which questions how an omni-benevolent and omnipotent god could allow suffering.• Being brought up in secular, non-religious cultures or communities may reduce the influence of religious belief, leading individuals to adopt a non-theistic worldview.• Some may not experience a personal connection to a higher power or feel that spirituality is unnecessary for meaning, purpose or morality. <p>Suggested learning activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A card sort to ensure understanding of the different groups listed above. Learners could include examples where possible.• Learners could find examples of people who fit the different categories listed, and/or who justify their belief in a god/gods or lack of belief using any of these reasons.
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Christianity

1.2a Beliefs – Christianity	
1.2.1a Key beliefs and teachings in Christianity	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Christian beliefs and teachings about the nature of God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creator ex nihilo; Genesis 1:1-2 • omnipotent • omniscient • omnibenevolent • omnipresent. <p>Christian beliefs and teachings about the Trinity: three aspects of one God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Father: Luke 15:11-32 • Son: John 1:1-3, 14 • Holy Spirit: John 14:25-26 and Galatians 5:22-23.
	<p>Christians believe that the universe was created by God. In the book of Genesis, it states that the world was created ‘from nothing’. In Latin, this is ‘ex nihilo’ Therefore, God is the Creator <u>‘ex nihilo’</u> as he created it all from nothing.</p> <p>Christians believe that God is <u>omnipotent</u>. This word originates in the Latin language and means ‘all-powerful’. There is nothing God cannot do.</p> <p>Christians also believe God is <u>omniscient</u>, which means ‘all-knowing’. God knows all things, in the past, the present and the future.</p> <p>Christians believe God is <u>omnibenevolent</u>, which means ‘all-loving’. They believe that God is love, and that only good things come from God.</p> <p>For Christians, God is <u>omnipresent</u>, which means he is present everywhere at all times.</p> <p>Christians are <u>monotheists</u>, which means they believe in one God. There are three distinct persons in God, and these persons form a unity. This belief is called the <u>Trinity</u>, or ‘Tri-unity’. The three persons of the Trinity are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God the <u>Father</u> – the Creator and sustainer of all things • God the <u>Son</u> – Jesus Christ, the incarnation of God, who was the ultimate sacrifice for the sins of humanity • God the <u>Holy Spirit</u> – the power of God that is active in the world today. <p>All persons of the Trinity are fully God, co-equal and co-eternal.</p>

	<p>Christian beliefs and teachings about Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • birth: Matthew 1:18- 2:12, Luke 1:26-35 and 2:1-21 • incarnation as the Word: John 1:1-3, 10: 30-38, 14:1-9 • ministry: Luke 5: 17-24, John 11: 21-27 • death: Mark 15:1-3 • Resurrection: John 20:1-21 • Ascension: Acts 1:9-11 • Jesus as the Messiah: Matthew 16:13-17 • as the way to salvation and atonement: John 3:16, 14:6. 	<p>In Luke 15:11-32, Jesus tells the Parable of the Lost Son. This story helps Christians to understand that God is a forgiving and merciful Father, who welcomes all those who turn to him as his children.</p> <p>In John 1:1-3,14, Christians learn that Jesus is referred to as the Word. The Word existed ‘in the beginning’ (John 1:1) which emphasises the eternal nature of the Trinity. Jesus is the link between God and people.</p> <p>John 14: 25-26 includes a clear statement about the Holy Spirit and its work in the world.</p> <p>Similarly, Galatians 5:22-23 lists the ‘fruits of the Spirit’. These are a list of virtues that Christians can develop with the help of the Holy Spirit.</p> <p>Suggested learning activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design a symbol to represent each of the ‘omni’ words to help with learning their meanings • Label a diagram of the Trinity to show understanding of the three distinct persons. Use this diagram to aid discussion of how the roles are distinct but interconnected, emphasising that all work together as one God. <p>Dramatised versions of the birth of Jesus can be found here: The Gospel of Matthew - The Nativity - TrueTube The Gospel of Luke - The Nativity - TrueTube</p> <p><u>incarnation</u> – ‘God made flesh’. This means God in human form. Jesus was fully human and fully divine. The birth narratives in Matthew and Luke highlight different aspects of Jesus’ birth. They are found in Matthew 1:18- 2:12, Luke 1:26-35 and 2:1-21.</p>
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Word – Jesus is referred to as the Word in John’s Gospel. Word comes from the Greek ‘logos’ and existed ‘in the beginning’. This emphasises the eternal nature of the Trinity.

ministry – Jesus’ ministry refers to his public life, during which he preached about God’s Kingdom. His ministry focused on proclaiming repentance, love, mercy, and salvation. He performed miracles including healing the sick and casting out demons, which revealed God’s power and Jesus’ divine authority. Central to his teachings were parables that explained spiritual truths, like the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son. His ministry culminated in his death and resurrection, fulfilling his mission to redeem humanity.

Death – Christians believe that Jesus died to save humanity from sin and restore their relationship with God. Christians believe that sin separates them from God. Jesus, being sinless, took humanity’s punishment upon himself by dying on the cross. This act of sacrificial love provides forgiveness for sin and opens the way to eternal life for all who believe in him.

Resurrection – Jesus rose from the dead on the third day after his crucifixion, demonstrating his victory over sin and death. It is central to the Christian faith, as it confirms his divine nature. Through his resurrection, Jesus offers believers the hope of eternal life and the assurance of a restored relationship with God.

Ascension – This event, 40 days after the resurrection, was when Jesus returned to heaven. It signifies the completion of Jesus’ earthly mission and the beginning of his heavenly reign. Before ascending, Jesus commissioned his disciples to spread the Gospel (The Great Commission) and promised to send the Holy Spirit to empower them. Christians believe the ascension highlights Jesus’ divine authority and assures believers of his continued presence.

	<p>Christian beliefs and teachings about the soul:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • created in the image of God; Genesis 1:27 • a divine spark originating from God; Genesis 2:7 • eternal and transcendent • humans possess rationality and free will but have fallen; Genesis 1:26-28; Genesis 2:15-17 and Genesis 3. 	<p>Messiah – This means ‘the anointed one’ and refers to the one sent by God to be humanity’s saviour. Christians believe this person to be Jesus. The writers of the Gospels suggest that all the predictions about the Messiah in the Old Testament came true in Jesus’ life. In Matthew’s Gospel, Peter identified Jesus as the Messiah.</p> <p>Salvation – Christians believe that, through his death on the cross, Jesus saved humanity from their sins. Believing in Jesus offers the opportunity for salvation; they could now be reconciled with God and be with him in the afterlife. The name Jesus – Yeshua in Hebrew – means ‘the Lord saves’.</p> <p>Atonement – The death of Jesus was an act of atonement for the sins of the people in the world. The death of Jesus is therefore part of the process of the salvation of humanity.</p> <p>Suggested learning activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The following video clip is an excellent summary of Jesus’ atoning sacrifice. Learners could watch this and write their own summary of atonement. For greater challenge, a word limit could be given. How God Deals With Evil Without Destroying Humanity <p>Christians believe that humans are created in the <u>image of God</u> (<i>imago Dei</i>) (Genesis 1:27). Christians also believe that God breathed life into humans which makes them different to all other species (Genesis 2:7). Following this, humans are therefore the only species to have a spiritual dimension, referred to as the ‘soul’. This is the part of humans that connects with God and is the <u>eternal</u> part of them that lives on in the afterlife. The soul is considered <u>transcendent</u> because it is believed to exist beyond the physical body and material world. Human beings are created by God to be <u>rational beings</u> who can use their reason and judgement to make informed decisions. Humans are expected to rule over and look after the earth (Genesis 1:26-28). They also have <u>free will</u>, which means they have</p>
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		<p>the ability to make choices for themselves. However, when Adam and Eve disobeyed God's instruction (Genesis 2:15-17), they came to understand right and wrong but their perfect relationship with God was broken. This is called <u>The Fall</u>. (Genesis 3) A further consequence was that all human beings will inherit 'Original Sin' and carry this within their nature. This fallen nature means that humans are separated from God.</p> <p>Suggested learning activity: Around the outline of a human body, learners could write each key term relating to the nature of human beings, e.g. imago Dei, soul, free will, etc. They could then do a match up activity where they place brief explanations with each key term.</p> <p>Key beliefs and teachings of Christianity found within:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the Apostles' Creed• the Lord's Prayer. <p><u>The Apostles' Creed:</u> This is a statement of Christian faith traditionally attributed to the apostles, though it was not directly written by them. It outlines the core Christian beliefs and is used in many Christian denominations as a declaration of faith, particularly during baptisms and worship. The creed is structured into three main sections, reflecting the Trinity. The creed emphasises unity of belief across Christian denominations.</p> <p><u>The Lord's Prayer:</u> The Lord's Prayer is taught by Jesus in the Gospels (Matthew 6:9–13, Luke 11:2–4), and is a model for how Christians should pray. It begins by honouring God, expresses a desire for God's will to be done on earth, and asks for daily needs, forgiveness of sins, and deliverance from evil. It is both a personal and communal prayer, emphasising the believer's relationship with God and others.</p> <p>Suggested learning activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Text analysis: Analyse the Apostles' Creed to identify key beliefs about the Trinity and the Church.
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<p>The importance of the Bible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● using the Bible as a source of wisdom and guidance – literal, conservative and liberal interpretations. 	<p>The Bible is the holy book for Christians. They believe it is a book which has been inspired by the Holy Spirit and is ‘God-breathed’, therefore it is an important source of wisdom and authority for Christians. It is the revealed and inspired Word of God, so many Christians will turn to it for guidance. For example, the Ten Commandments are a list of rules for believers to abide by.</p> <p><u>Literalists</u> – some Christians are called literalists and believe that every word of the Bible is literally true. For example, a literalist would believe that God created the world in six days (24-hour periods) and created a man on the sixth day and made a woman out of man’s rib as this is how the first two chapters of the book of Genesis described it.</p> <p><u>Conservative</u> Christians. Whilst they believe that the Bible is the revealed and inspired Word of God, they consider other factors need to be considered in discovering the meaning of the Bible. These Christians believe that readers must use their intelligence, the guidance of the Holy Spirit and Church teachings in order to understand the writers’ intentions fully. For example, in the book of Genesis, Conservative Christians may suggest that the world was created by God in six periods of time, rather than days.</p> <p><u>Liberal</u> Christians see the Bible more as a personal guide to living a life pleasing to God, rather than something to be strictly followed. They may suggest that the Bible is written about God and contains useful information to help believers understand their faith better, but that, as it was written by humans inspired by God, it could contain errors. For example, the Creation story in Genesis simply helps humans to understand that God is the Creator of the world.</p> <p>Suggested learning activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ask learners to create flashcards showing different ways of interpreting the Bible. Give examples of different biblical teaching e.g. Noah’s Ark and ask learners to explain how each interpretation would view the passage.
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<p>1.2.2a Christian belief in action</p>	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Key Christian beliefs and teachings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supporting the poor; Acts 20:35 • giving generously; 2 Corinthians 9:7 • duty to put faith into action; James 2:17. <p>Contemporary local or national examples of Christian faith and belief in action – community work and faith-based activism.</p>	<p>Christians believe helping the poor is a fundamental expression of Christian love and charity, rooted in Jesus' teachings. Christians are encouraged to practise acts of mercy, share their resources, support social justice initiatives and work to address systemic causes of poverty. Charity and advocacy are seen as ways to build a more just and compassionate society, in line with Christ's command to love one another.</p> <p>In Acts 20:35, believers are reminded of Jesus' instruction to give rather than receive, which encourages them to support the poor and needy whenever possible.</p> <p>In 2 Corinthians 9:7, St Paul emphasises the spirit in which giving should be undertaken. The act of giving is meaningful when it comes from the heart.</p> <p>James 2:17 teaches that true faith is not passive; it requires action to be genuine and alive. This verse encourages believers to live out their faith in practical, observable ways, such as helping the poor.</p> <p>Examples of Christian faith in action could include: Christian Aid, World Vision, Tearfund, The Salvation Army, HOPE International, YMCA.</p> <p>Community work includes people working to help others in their community. An example would be volunteering at a local food bank or soup kitchen to ensure the homeless or those in need are fed.</p> <p>Faith-based activism is where someone is motivated by their faith to advocate for a particular cause. Examples vary widely but can include speaking out for political prisoners or those persecuted because of their faith.</p>
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	<p>How the aims and work of Christian Aid reflect Christian beliefs in action.</p>	<p>The Church of England has some useful video clips here: Faith in action videos The Church of England These can be used to show a variety of people putting their faith into action.</p> <p><u>Christian Aid:</u> The Christian Aid website has a variety of resources and lessons to help deliver information on the charity, including its aims and work. Christian Aid - UK charity fighting global poverty - Christian Aid</p> <p>There are also video resources available on the Christian Aid YouTube page: thisischristianaid - YouTube</p> <p>Christian Aid is a global charity rooted in Christian principles. It aims to address global poverty, inequality and social injustice with the ultimate goal of creating a world where everyone can live with dignity, free from poverty and oppression. Its work is inspired by the values of compassion, justice, and the belief in the dignity of all people. Christian Aid provides emergency aid such as food, water, shelter and medical aid to communities affected by natural disasters or conflict. The charity also works to empower communities to build sustainable lives through education, job creation, and agricultural support. They advocate for urgent action to address climate change and support communities in adapting to climate related challenges. They also defend human rights and speak out about issues such as gender inequality, racism and exploitation.</p> <p>Suggested learning activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Research a local Christian charity. Create a fact file of their aims and how these are put into practice. For greater challenge, learners could include Bible quotes to show examples of faith in action.
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1.3a Beliefs about life and death – Christianity

Content Amplification		Teacher Guidance
1.3.1a Meaning of life in Christianity	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Christian beliefs about the meaning of life:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to worship God; Romans 12:1 • teachings on loving God and others; Matthew 22:37-39 • spiritual growth and transformation as essential for understanding life's purpose; Luke 8:1-15 - Parable of the Sower. 	<p>For Christians, the meaning of life is rooted in a relationship with God, living according to his will, and fulfilling his purpose. Many Christians believe their primary purpose is <u>to worship God</u>, reflect his love, and glorify him in all they do. This instruction can be seen in Romans 12:1. For Christians, life finds meaning in following Jesus, who provides an example of love, service, and obedience to God. Through faith in him, Christians seek eternal life and reconciliation with God. Christians are also called to <u>love their neighbours</u>, serve others selflessly and build communities based on compassion and justice. There are many teachings in the Bible on loving God and others. For example, in Matthew 22:37-39, Jesus summarises the Ten Commandments into two important rules: to love God and to love others.</p> <p>In Luke 18:1-15, the Parable of the Sower teaches believers of the importance of being receptive to God's Word. In the parable, the seed represents the word, and the different kinds of soil represent how the word is accepted.</p> <p>Path – The seed is eaten by birds, symbolising those who hear the word but fail to understand or accept it.</p> <p>Rocky ground – The seed grows quickly but withers due to shallow roots, representing people who initially accept the message but fall away due to hardship or lack of commitment.</p> <p>Thorny ground – The seed grows but is choked by worries and materialism, symbolising those who are distracted by worldly concerns and neglect the message.</p> <p>Good soil – The seed grows and produces a fruitful harvest, representing those who hear, understand, and live out God's word.</p>

		<p>Therefore, Christians believe that spiritual growth and transformation is essential for understanding life's purpose.</p> <p>Suggested learning activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play a song with themes of growth or faith (e.g. 'Planting Seeds' by Lauryn Hill). Discuss the lyrics and how they relate to the parable. Encourage learners to create their own poem or short song about the parable.
1.3.2a Christian beliefs about life after death	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>The basis for Christian belief in life after death:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> John 3:16 John 11: 25-26. <p>Christian beliefs and teachings about life after death:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> heaven; John 14:1-4 hell; Luke 12:4-5; 2 Thessalonians 1:5-9 resurrection; Luke 16:19-31; John 11:24-27; 1 Corinthians 15: 20-22; 1 Corinthians 15:42-44. 	<p>Christians believe there is an afterlife where the soul continues after the physical death. They believe they will be judged after their death by God, who will decide on their eternal destiny. Belief in the sacrifice Jesus made for all people can bring salvation (John 3:16). In John's Gospel, Jesus made clear to his followers that belief in him was necessary for a place in Heaven (John 11:25-26).</p> <p><u>heaven</u> – Eternal union with God for those who have lived in grace and holiness. There is plenty of room for all in Heaven (John 14:1-4).</p> <p><u>hell</u> – Eternal separation from God for those who die in unrepented mortal sin. Luke 12:4-5 reminds believers that judgement lies with God. 2 Thessalonians 1:5-9 states that God is a fair and just God and will punish those who deserve it.</p> <p><u>resurrection</u> – Christians believe in the resurrection of the dead, a core teaching of the faith. They believe that all people will be resurrected at the end of time (1 Corinthians 15:20-22). The faithful will be raised to eternal life with God, while others face judgement. The resurrected will receive glorified, imperishable bodies, free from pain, death, or decay. (1 Corinthians 15:42-44) This belief provides Christians with hope and purpose.</p> <p>Luke 16:19-31 is the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, which teaches Christians that their actions in this life will impact their place in the afterlife.</p>

		<p>John 11:24-27 recounts the time when Jesus identifies himself as the source of both resurrection (life after death) and life in the present. Faith in Jesus grants eternal life, and through him, believers will experience resurrection.</p> <p>Suggested learning activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read through the biblical text of the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus. Discuss how the Rich Man's behaviour was unacceptable and suggest ways in which he could have behaved differently. How can this be placed into a modern-day context?
1.3.3a Christian mourning and funeral practices	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>The importance of mourning and funeral practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> committing a person's body to God giving thanks to God for that person's life celebrating and remembering the life of the deceased using signs and symbols to express a deeper meaning showing the link between this life and Christian beliefs about life after death. <p>Christian mourning practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use of symbols, such as wearing black prayers recited for the deceased. 	<p>Christian funerals will often include a <u>celebration and thanksgiving for the life</u> of the person who has died. While it is a sad occasion where people are grieving, there will be also be hope and trust in God. The body and the soul of the deceased is committed to God. There are symbols, prayers and readings that convey beliefs about eternal life. Christian funerals reflect the link between this life and Christian beliefs about life after death. For example, the service will express the hope of eternal life and the resurrection of the body on the Last Day. Christian funerals emphasise that death is not the end, and through the mercy of God, the deceased is now at rest in God's eternal presence.</p> <p>Christians often wear black to a funeral as a symbol of mourning. Some Christians will recite prayers for the deceased, such as 'Eternal Rest' prayer, which affirms their faith in the afterlife and the promise of eternal peace with God for all who die in Christ. For example, the priest or vicar may wear purple vestments. Purple is a sign of repentance and forgiveness of sins as well as a sign of hope. Some Christians may use white lilies on or around the coffin to represent purity and the hope in eternal life for the deceased.</p>

<p>Christian funeral practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vigil service • funeral service – prayers, hymns and eulogy • burial or cremation and the rite of committal. 	<p>Christian funeral practices:</p> <p><u>Vigil Service</u>: This sometimes takes place the evening before the funeral and includes the Reception of the Body. It is a short service where the body of the deceased is received into the church, with readings and prayers. The coffin is then left in the church overnight in readiness for the funeral the following day.</p> <p><u>Funeral service</u>: The service begins with <u>prayers</u>, scripture readings, or <u>hymns</u>, acknowledging God's presence and offering comfort to the grieving. Passages are read from the Bible that emphasise God's love, hope in the resurrection, and eternal life.</p> <p><u>Eulogy</u> – there may be a short talk about the deceased person, where a relative or friend speaks about and celebrates their life.</p> <p>Prayers are offered for the deceased, asking God to welcome them into eternal rest, and for the comfort of the grieving.</p> <p>Songs of faith, hope, and comfort may be sung or played. Examples include "Amazing Grace" or "How Great Thou Art."</p> <p>At the <u>graveside or crematorium</u>, final prayers and blessings are given as the body is laid to rest. Words like "ashes to ashes, dust to dust" acknowledge human mortality while affirming resurrection hope. This is referred to as the Rite of Committal, and it reflects the Christian beliefs in the eternal life promised in Christ, and the peace of knowing that the deceased is now in God's care. Through this ritual, the Church reaffirms its faith in life after death and comforts the grieving.</p> <p>Suggested learning activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners could create a flow diagram to show the different parts of the Christian funeral service. For greater challenge, they could include examples of symbolism.
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1.4a Religious beliefs in contemporary society – Christianity

	Content Amplification	Teacher Guidance
1.4.1a Christian identity, belonging and practices	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>The importance of expressing a sense of religious identity and belonging for Christians, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • belonging to a worshipping community • a shared sense of purpose, direction and morality in life. <p>Christian identity and belonging expressed through symbolic actions – pilgrimage.</p> <p>Possible reasons for completing pilgrimage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • showing commitment to God as an act of religious devotion • learning more about Christian figures by visiting sites associated with their lives • following in the footsteps of key figures in Christianity • experiencing a sense of community • pilgrimage sites may be associated with miracles. 	<p>Through baptism, Christians are called to a life of service to God and to others, assisted by the Holy Spirit. Belonging to a worship community and meeting with them regularly can help a Christian to strengthen their faith, grow spiritually and live out their relationship with God in fellowship with others. <u>Worship communities</u> provide opportunities for shared prayer and worship, and mutual support in living out the Gospel. Believers can gain support from others within the community and receive advice and guidance on matters of morality or problems that can occur in life. They foster a sense of <u>belonging</u>, and help members serve others through acts of charity and social justice. It can provide a shared sense of <u>purpose and direction in life</u>, helping believers to achieve their telos; the ultimate goal of glorifying God and attaining eternal life with him in Heaven.</p> <p>A pilgrimage is a special journey to a place of religious importance. There are many places of pilgrimage around the world, including The Holy Land, Rome and St David's. Christians may go on a pilgrimage to express their identity and develop a sense of belonging with others in their religious community.</p> <p>Christians do not have to go on a pilgrimage but may choose to for many reasons. They may want to complete it as a sign of dedication and commitment to God and their religious community; to learn more about religious figures and follow in their footsteps, such as learning about Jesus by walking the Via Dolorosa; or to experience a religious experience or miracle, such as by attending a pilgrimage to Lourdes in France in order to be healed.</p> <p>Useful information can be found here: Centre for Christian Pilgrimage (christian-pilgrimage.org.uk)</p>

	<p>The role, significance and features of the following sites of Christian pilgrimage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St David's Cathedral, Pembrokeshire • Taizé. <p>Christian identity and belonging expressed through symbolic actions – rites of passage.</p> <p>The role, significance and features of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • baptism: Mark 1:9-11, infant; implied in Acts 16:33 and believers' baptism; Acts 2:37-41 • eucharist/communion: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 • confirmation: Acts 2:1-13. 	<p>Suggested learning activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research a Christian place of pilgrimage and create a presentation to show why believers visit there and what they might do there. <p>Christians visit <u>St David's in Pembrokeshire</u> on pilgrimage to honour St David, the patron saint of Wales, and deepen their faith. St David, a 6th-century bishop and missionary, founded a monastic community at St David's. Pilgrims visit his shrine to seek spiritual inspiration and pray for guidance. St David's Cathedral, built on the site of his monastery, is a place of great religious and historical importance. During the Middle Ages, two pilgrimages to St David's were considered equal to one to Rome. Pilgrims often seek reflection, prayer, and renewal of their faith. The surrounding Pembrokeshire coastline adds to the sense of awe and connection to God's creation. Pilgrims may also visit St Non's Chapel and Holy Well, said to be the birthplace of St David.</p> <p>Some Christians visit <u>Taizé</u>, an ecumenical monastic community in France, for spiritual renewal, prayer and fellowship. It is a place of pilgrimage, particularly for young people, fostering unity among Christians of different traditions. Pilgrims participate in the community's worship, which includes meditative chants, silence, and scripture readings, focusing on simplicity and inner peace. Pilgrims live simply, sharing meals and chores, experiencing a sense of unity and solidarity. Taizé emphasises healing divisions between Christians and building bridges between cultures and denominations. The community also offers programs for young people, encouraging them to reflect on their purpose, faith, and role in creating peace.</p> <p><u>Baptism</u> is the first sacrament by which a person becomes a member of the Church, which originated at the baptism of Jesus (Mark 1:9-11). A person who is baptised is welcomed into the family of faith through the Holy Spirit. Some Christian Churches baptise infants, while others prefer to baptise adults, which is called believers'</p>
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baptism. Evidence for both types of baptism can be found in the Bible. For example, infant baptism is implied in Acts 16:33, while believers' baptism is seen in Acts 2:37-41.

Suggested video clip: [Christian Baptism - TrueTube](#)

Suggested learning activity:

- Debate – Learners could evaluate whether infants or adults should be baptised and give reasons for their views.

The Eucharist / Communion was instituted by Jesus Christ at the Last Supper. Eucharist is a Greek word meaning ‘thanksgiving’ and many Christians believe it is an opportunity to celebrate all that God has done through the death and resurrection of Jesus. (1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

Different denominations will have different beliefs about the bread and wine during the service. For example, some Christians such as the Lutheran Church believe in consubstantiation, which is where Jesus is truly present within the bread and wine, but they remain unchanged. However, Baptists may believe the bread and wine are symbols of Jesus' body and blood. The Eucharist is spiritual food for the believer, and it strengthens them to carry out their mission and vocation in the world.

Suggested learning activities:

- Read a Gospel account of the Last Supper. Now, use an inference grid to explore a piece of modern art depicting the Last Supper, for example ‘The Jesus Table’ by Sieger Köder. What links can learners make between the artwork and the Gospel account?
- Make a chart to show the different interpretations of the Eucharist, e.g. transubstantiation, consubstantiation, Real Presence, symbolic. For greater challenge, research the

		<p>Christian denominations who may hold a specific belief about the Eucharist and include them in the table.</p> <p>Some churches perform the rite of <u>confirmation</u>, which allows a person to renew the vows made at baptism and to take on their Christian commitment for themselves. Many Christians believe that the person being confirmed receives the Holy Spirit in a special way to enable them to carry out their mission and vocation in the world. This reflects the moment at Pentecost when the disciples received the Holy Spirit, as Jesus had promised. (Acts 2:1-13).</p> <p>Suggested learning activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the vows made by a confirmation candidate and identify what the vows mean and how they can be lived out in everyday life.
1.4.2a Christianity and morality	<p>Learners should understand: Christian beliefs and teachings about how to make moral decisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • obeying divine commands: the Ten Commandments; Exodus 20:1-17 • the Bible as a source of morality: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christian love (agape): Luke 10:25-37; Luke 13:34-35 • forgiveness: Matthew 6:12; Matthew 18:21-22; Luke 23:34 and Matthew 5:43-44 • the use of conscience to make moral decisions; 2 Corinthians 1:12. 	<p>For Christians, deciding what is right and wrong is linked to the teachings of Christ, the teachings of the Church, and the will of God. Any act or action that goes against the will of God can be defined as 'wrong'. Christians use their conscience, faith, <u>the Bible</u> and Church teaching when making important decisions and deciding if an act is right or wrong. Christians believe that God has given them guidelines to help them understand morally right behaviour. For example, the <u>Ten Commandments</u>, or Decalogue, are found in the Old Testament (Exodus 20:1-17) and form the basis of all moral behaviour.</p> <p>The basis of <u>Jesus' teachings is love</u>. The word Jesus uses for 'love' comes from the Greek word '<u>agapè</u>' and refers to the love God has for humans and the type of unselfish, compassionate love humans should show to others. This is illustrated in the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). For Christians, this unconditional love means putting the well-being of others before your own. Christians believe that Jesus' sacrifice on the cross was an ultimate example of agapè.</p>

In Luke 13:34-35, Jesus is distressed due to the lack of love being shown among the people. He warns them of the consequences of this behaviour.

Suggested video clip: [Agape - Love - YouTube](#)

Suggested learning activities:

- Evaluate which is the most important source of morality for Christians. For example, the Bible, Jesus' example, conscience, Church teaching.
- Ask learners to create a short video, TikTok, or slideshow retelling the parable of the Good Samaritan in their own words or in a modern setting. Share and discuss the videos, focusing on how each retelling conveys the core message of the parable.

Forgiveness is an important concept, and Jesus refers to it many times – in parables, when asked questions about how his followers should behave and even when he was being put to death (Luke 23:34). Jesus teaches that God is forgiving but that forgiveness of humans depends on whether people are willing and able to forgive others. This idea is referred to in the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:12). Forgiveness is an ongoing process and should be repeated as many times as is necessary (Matthew 18:21-22). Forgiveness is challenging for believers, but Jesus extends the idea even further and links it to the notion of 'loving your enemy' (Matthew 5:43-44).

Suggested learning activity:

- Research case studies on forgiveness and give reasons why the person involved could/could not forgive.

Some examples can be found here: [Examples of personal forgiveness - Forgiveness - GCSE Religious Studies Revision - WJEC - BBC Bitesize](#)

	<p>Morality and Divine judgement in the afterlife:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • treasures on earth and in Heaven; Matthew 6:19-21 and Luke 16:19-31 • future judgement based on earthly actions; Matthew 25:31-46 - Parable of the Sheep and the Goats. 	<p>The word <u>conscience</u> comes from the Latin words <i>con</i> meaning ‘with’ and <i>scientia</i> meaning ‘knowledge’. Many Christians believe that conscience is a God-given ability to know the difference between right and wrong, (2 Corinthians 1:12) as part of being created <i>imago Dei</i>.</p> <p>As part of his <u>moral teachings</u>, Jesus spoke about how someone could be rewarded for their good actions and likened the reward to <u>treasure in Heaven</u> (Matthew 6:19-21). He taught that doing good deeds was like making deposits into a spiritual treasury where it is secure, safe from being stolen, losing value or being destroyed (Luke 16:19-31).</p> <p>In the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats, Jesus taught about General Judgement, which will take place on the Last Day. Jesus will return to earth in his Second Coming, or Parousia, and will judge all people according to their response to those in need while on earth (Matthew 25:31-46).</p> <p>Christians also believe they will receive judgement at the moment of their death. God will judge their earthly actions and decide if they will spend all eternity in Heaven or Hell.</p> <p>Suggested learning activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats and make a list of the expectations of those who will be sent to Heaven/Hell. <p>Moral evil – This is suffering caused by humans' moral choices. Examples could include murder, rape, theft, violence, lying.</p> <p>Natural evil – This is suffering caused by natural events and therefore it is argued attributable to God if God created the world. Examples could include earthquakes, flooding, drought, hurricanes.</p>
	<p>Learners should have a basic understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what is meant by the problem of evil – what is meant by moral evil (caused by humans) and natural evil (caused by nature) • the philosophical challenges posed by belief in God and the existence of evil and suffering – the inconsistent triad • what a theodicy is, and how the Irenaean (soul-making) and Augustinian (soul-deciding) theodicies attempt to address the problem of evil. 	

Suggested learning activity:

- Research case studies of evil and suffering and decide if they are examples of moral or natural evil.

The presence of evil in the world sometimes causes people to question God's existence. J.L. Mackie identified the 'inconsistent triad', where he suggested that the following three (triad) things are inconsistent as they cannot all be true at the same time: He said that if God is omnipotent (all-powerful) and omnibenevolent (all-loving), then evil would not exist. However, we have experienced evil and know that it exists. Therefore, either God is not all-powerful because he cannot stop suffering, or he is not all-loving because he doesn't want to stop suffering. This dilemma is called the Problem of Evil.

Suggested learning activity:

- Draw a diagram to represent the Inconsistent Triad.

The word theodicy comes from two Greek terms: Theos – God and Dike – Justice. A theodicy attempts to justify the existence of an omnipotent and omnibenevolent God in the light of the existence of evil.

Two early Church Fathers put forward their theodicies to try to explain the problem of evil. These are Augustine and Irenaeus.

Augustine believed that suffering was the fault of humans and angels who used their free will to turn away from God. Humans and angels are to blame for the suffering in the world not God. Augustine taught that God gives humans the chance to be forgiven for sin through Jesus' death on the cross. If humans turn back to God, then they will be in Heaven (Soul-deciding theodicy).

		<p>Irenaeus believed that God made mankind in his ‘image to grow into his likeness’. God allows humans to suffer so that humans grow to be more like him. God has given humans free will and we can make good or bad choices. Irenaeus believed that all humans will be in heaven (Soul-making theodicy).</p> <p>Suggested learning activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a Venn diagram to show the similarities and differences between the two theodicies mentioned above.
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Catholic Christianity

1.2b Beliefs – Catholic Christianity	
1.2.1b Key beliefs and teachings in Catholic Christianity	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Catholic beliefs and teachings about the nature of God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creator ex nihilo; Genesis 1:1-12 • omnipotent • omniscient • omnibenevolent • omnipresent. <p>Catholic beliefs and teachings about the Trinity: three persons, one God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St. Augustine's De Trinitate 8.10 • Father: Luke 15:11-32 • Son: John 1:1-3, 14 • Holy Spirit: John 14:25-26 and Galatians 5:22-23.
	<p>Catholics believe that God is love (1 John 4:16; Deus Caritas Est – Benedict XV1) and is the Redeemer of the World (CCC 410-412). Catholics also believe that the universe was created by God. In the book of Genesis, it states that the world was created ‘from nothing’. In Latin, this is ‘ex nihilo’ Therefore, God is the Creator <u>‘ex nihilo’</u> as he created it all from nothing.</p> <p>Catholics believe that God is <u>omnipotent</u>. This word originates in the Latin language and means ‘all-powerful’. There is nothing God cannot do.</p> <p>Catholics also believe God is <u>omniscient</u>, which means ‘all-knowing’. God knows all things, in the past, the present and the future.</p> <p>Catholics believe God is <u>omnibenevolent</u>, which means ‘all-loving’. They believe that God is love and that only good things come from God.</p> <p>For Catholics, God is <u>omnipresent</u>, which means he is present everywhere at all times.</p> <p>Catholics are <u>monotheists</u>, which means they believe in one God. There are three distinct persons in God and these persons form a unity. This belief is called the <u>Trinity</u>, or ‘Tri-unity’. The three persons of the Trinity are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God the <u>Father</u> – the Creator and sustainer of all things • God the <u>Son</u> – Jesus Christ, the incarnation of God, who was the ultimate sacrifice for the sins of humanity • God the <u>Holy Spirit</u> – the power of God that is active in the world today. <p>The Catechism teaches Catholics that the divine persons are</p>

consubstantial, distinct from and relative to one another (CCC 253-256). This means that all persons of the Trinity are fully God, co-equal and co-eternal.

St Augustine emphasised the unity and equality of the three persons of the Trinity in his document ‘De Trinitate’ – no part of the Trinity is greater than the others.

In Luke 15:11-32, Jesus tells the Parable of the Lost Son. This story helps Christians to understand that God is a forgiving and merciful Father, who welcomes all those who turn to him as his children.

In John 1:1-3,14, Christians learn that Jesus is referred to as the Word. The Word existed ‘in the beginning’ (John 1:1) which emphasises the eternal nature of the Trinity. Jesus is the link between God and people.

John 14: 25-26 includes a clear statement about the Holy Spirit and its work in the world.

Similarly, Galatians 5:22-23 lists the ‘fruits of the Spirit’. These are a list of virtues that Christians can develop with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 2:1-18 includes the account of Pentecost, when the disciples received the Holy Spirit for the first time, as promised by Jesus.

Suggested learning activities:

- Design a symbol to represent each of the ‘omni’ words to help with learning their meanings.
- Label a diagram of the Trinity to show understanding of the three distinct persons. Use this diagram to aid discussion of how the roles are distinct but interconnected, emphasising that all work together as one God.

	<p>Catholic beliefs and teachings about Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • birth: Matthew 1:18- 2:12, Luke 1:26-35 and 2:1-21 • Incarnation of the Word: John 1:1-3, 10: 30-38, 14:1-9 • ministry; Luke 5: 17-24, John 11: 21-27 • death: Mark 15:1-3 • resurrection: John 20:1-21 • ascension: Acts 1:9-11 • Jesus as Messiah: Matthew 16:13-17 • as the way to salvation and atonement: John 3:16, 14:6. 	<p>Dramatized versions of the birth of Jesus can be found here:</p> <p>The Gospel of Matthew - The Nativity - TrueTube</p> <p>The Gospel of Luke - The Nativity - TrueTube</p> <p><u>incarnation</u> – ‘God made flesh’. This means God in human form. Jesus was fully human and fully divine. The birth narratives in Matthew and Luke highlight different aspects of Jesus’ birth. They are found in Matthew 1:18- 2:12, Luke 1:26-35 and 2:1-21.</p> <p><u>Word</u> – Jesus is referred to as the Word in John’s Gospel. Word comes from the Greek ‘logos’ and existed ‘in the beginning’. This emphasises the eternal nature of the Trinity.</p> <p><u>ministry</u> – Jesus’ ministry refers to his public life, during which he preached about God’s Kingdom. His ministry focused on proclaiming repentance, love, mercy and salvation. He performed miracles including healing the sick and casting out demons, which revealed God’s power and Jesus’ divine authority. Central to his teachings were parables that explained spiritual truths, like the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son. His ministry culminated in his death and resurrection, fulfilling his mission to redeem humanity.</p> <p><u>death</u> – Jesus died to save humanity from sin and restore their relationship with God. Catholics believe that sin separates them from God. Jesus, being sinless, took humanity’s punishment upon himself by dying on the cross. This act of sacrificial love provides forgiveness for sin and opens the way to eternal life for all who believe in him.</p> <p><u>Resurrection</u> – Jesus rose from the dead on the third day after his crucifixion, demonstrating his victory over sin and death. It is central to the Christian faith, as it confirms his divine nature. Through his resurrection, Jesus offers believers the hope of eternal life and the assurance of a restored relationship with God.</p>
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Ascension – This event, 40 days after the resurrection, was when Jesus returned to heaven to sit at the right hand of God the Father. It signifies the completion of Jesus' earthly mission and the beginning of his heavenly reign. Before ascending, Jesus commissioned His disciples to spread the Gospel (The Great Commission) and promised to send the Holy Spirit to empower them. Catholics believe the ascension highlights Jesus' divine authority and assures believers of His continued presence.

Messiah – This means 'the anointed one' and refers to the one sent by God to be humanity's saviour. Catholics believe this person to be Jesus. The writers of the Gospels suggest that all the predictions about the Messiah in the Old Testament came true in Jesus' life. In Matthew's Gospel, Peter identified Jesus as the Messiah.

Salvation – Catholics believe that, through his death on the cross, Jesus saved humanity from their sins. Believing in Jesus offers the opportunity for salvation; they could now be reconciled with God and be with him in the afterlife. The name Jesus – Yeshua in Hebrew – means 'the Lord saves'.

Atonement – The death of Jesus was an act of atonement for the sins of the people in the world. The death of Jesus is therefore part of the process of the salvation of humanity.

Suggested learning activity:

- The following video clip is an excellent summary of Jesus' atoning sacrifice. Learners could watch this and write their own summary of atonement. For greater challenge, a word limit could be given.

[How God Deals With Evil Without Destroying Humanity - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HgXzJyfjwIY)

<p>Catholic beliefs and teachings about the nature of the soul:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the soul is the innermost aspect and spiritual principle of the human person created in the image of God; Genesis 1:27a • a divine spark originating from God; Genesis 2:7 • immortal and transcendent • humans possess rationality and free will but have fallen; Genesis 1:26-28; Genesis 2:15-17 and Genesis 3. <p>Key Catholic beliefs and teachings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Nicene Creed • the Lord's prayer. 	<p>Catholics believe that humans are created in the <u>image of God</u> (<i>imago Dei</i>) (Genesis 1:27). Catholics also believe that God breathed life into humans which makes them different to all other species (Genesis 2:7). Following this, humans are therefore the only species to have a spiritual dimension, referred to as the 'soul'. This is the part of humans that connects with God and is the <u>immortal</u>, an immortal part of them that lives on in the afterlife. The soul is considered <u>transcendent</u> because it is believed to exist beyond the physical body and material world. The Catechism teaches Catholics that the soul is the innermost aspect and spiritual principle of the human person (CCC 362-368). This means that the soul is the core of a person's identity and existence.</p> <p>Human beings are created by God to be <u>rational beings</u> who can use their reason and judgement to make informed decisions. Humans are expected to rule over and look after the earth (Genesis 1:26-28). They also have <u>free will</u>, which means they have the ability to make choices for themselves. However, when Adam and Eve disobeyed God's instruction (Genesis 2:15-17), they came to understand right and wrong but their perfect relationship with God was broken. This is called <u>The Fall</u>. (Genesis 3) A further consequence was that all human beings will inherit 'Original Sin' and carry this within their nature. This fallen nature means that humans are separated from God.</p> <p>Suggested learning activity: Around the outline of a human body, learners could write each key term relating to the nature of human beings, e.g. <i>imago Dei</i>, soul, free will, etc. They could then do a match up activity where they place brief explanations with each key term.</p> <p>The Nicene Creed</p> <p>This is a statement of Christian faith formulated at the Councils of Nicaea (325 AD) and Constantinople (381 AD). The creed is recited</p>
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		<p>by Catholics during the Mass, and it affirms key beliefs about God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit and the Church.</p> <p><u>The Lord's Prayer</u></p> <p>This prayer, also called the Our Father, is taught by Jesus in the Gospels (Matthew 6:9–13, Luke 11:2–4), and is a model for how Christians should pray. It begins by honouring God, expresses a desire for God's will to be done on earth, and asks for daily needs, forgiveness of sins, and deliverance from evil. It is both a personal and communal prayer, emphasising the believer's relationship with God and others. This prayer is always recited as part of the Mass.</p> <p>Suggested learning activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text analysis: Analyse the Nicene Creed to identify key beliefs about the Trinity and the Church. <p>The Bible is the holy book for Christians. They believe it is a book which has been inspired by the Holy Spirit and is 'God-breathed', therefore it is an important source of wisdom and authority for Catholics. It is the revealed and inspired Word of God, so Catholics will turn to it for guidance. For example, the Ten Commandments are a list of rules for believers to abide by.</p> <p><u>Literalists</u> – Some Christians are called <u>literalists</u> and believe that every word of the Bible is literally true. For example, a literalist would believe that God created the world in six days (24-hour periods) and created a man on the sixth day and made a woman out of man's rib as this is how the first two chapters of the book of Genesis described it.</p> <p><u>Conservative Christians</u> – Whilst they believe that the Bible is the revealed and inspired Word of God, they consider other factors need to be considered in discovering the meaning of the Bible. Catholics believe that readers must use their intelligence, the guidance of the</p>
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		<p>Holy Spirit and Church teachings in order to understand the writers' intentions fully. For example, in the book of Genesis, Conservative Christians may suggest that the world was created by God in six periods of time, rather than days.</p> <p><u>Liberal</u> Christians – They see the Bible more as a personal guide to living a life pleasing to God, rather than something to be strictly followed. They may suggest that the Bible is written about God and contains useful information to help believers understand their faith better, but that, as it was written by humans inspired by God, it could contain errors. For example, the Creation story in Genesis simply helps humans to understand that God is the Creator of the world.</p> <p>Catholics will also refer to other sources of wisdom and authority when needing guidance. <u>Papal encyclicals</u> are formal letters or teachings issued by the Pope to address important matters of faith, morals or social issues. They are usually directed to bishops, clergy and all Catholics but can also be intended for a broader audience. Encyclicals provide guidance on applying Church doctrine to contemporary challenges and often clarify theological points, promote justice or encourage deeper spiritual reflection. While not considered infallible, they hold significant authority and contribute to the Church's ongoing teaching tradition. Examples include Laudato Si' (on the environment) and Fratelli Tutti (on social inclusion). The <u>Catechism of the Catholic Church</u> is a guide to Catholic faith and doctrine, presenting the Church's teachings on faith, morals, sacraments, prayer and the Ten Commandments. It aids Catholics in their understanding of what the Church teaches and celebrates.</p> <p>Suggested learning activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read an extract from one of the papal encyclicals or from the Catechism and use an inference grid to explore its meaning. How might this guide a Catholic in their everyday life?• Ask learners to create flashcards showing different ways of interpreting the Bible. Give examples of different biblical teaching
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		e.g. Noah's Ark and ask learners to explain how each interpretation would view the passage.
1.2.2b Catholic belief in action	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Key Catholic beliefs and teachings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supporting the poor; Acts 20:35 • giving generously; 2 Corinthians 9:7 • duty to put faith into action; James 2:17. • Preferential Option for the Poor. 	<p>Catholics believe helping the poor is a fundamental expression of Christian love and charity, rooted in Jesus' teachings. Catholic Social Teaching emphasises the importance of serving those in need. Catholics are encouraged to practice acts of mercy, share their resources, support social justice initiatives and work to address systemic causes of poverty. Charity and advocacy are seen as ways to build a more just and compassionate society in line with Christ's command to love one another. Learners should be familiar with the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. These are actions that reflect Christian love and compassion and emphasise faith in action. The Corporal Works of Mercy focus on meeting people's physical and material needs, inspired by Jesus' teachings in Matthew 25:35-40.</p> <p>They include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeding the hungry • Giving drink to the thirsty • Clothing the naked • Sheltering the homeless • Visiting the sick • Visiting the imprisoned • Burying the dead. <p>The Spiritual Works of Mercy aim to care for people's spiritual and emotional needs. They include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructing the ignorant (teaching others about faith) • Advising the doubtful • Consoling the sorrowful • Admonishing sinners (guiding others away from sin) • Forgiving offenses • Bearing wrongs patiently • Praying for the living and the dead.

	<p>Contemporary local or national examples of Catholic faith and belief in action – community work and faith-based activism.</p> <p>How the aims and work of Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD) reflect Catholic belief in action.</p>	<p>Further information can be found here: https://fwdioc.org/works-of-mercy.pdf</p> <p>Suggested learning activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners could take each of the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy and decide how these could be shown in everyday life. How do they display faith in action? <p>In Acts 20:35, believers are reminded of Jesus' instruction to give rather than receive, which encourages them to support the poor and needy whenever possible.</p> <p>In 2 Corinthians 9:7, St Paul emphasises the spirit in which giving should be undertaken. The act of giving is meaningful when it comes from the heart.</p> <p>James 2:17 teaches that true faith is not passive; it requires action to be genuine and alive. This verse encourages believers to live out their faith in practical, observable ways, such as helping the poor.</p> <p>Examples of Catholic faith in action could include: CAFOD, Missio, the Saint Vincent de Paul Society (SVP), the Catholic Association for Racial Justice (CARJ), the Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN), the National Justice and Peace Network.</p> <p><u>CAFOD</u>:</p> <p>The CAFOD website has a variety of resources and lessons to help deliver information on the charity, including its aims and work.</p> <p>www.cafod.org.uk</p> <p>There are also video resources available on the CAFOD YouTube page: We Are CAFOD CAFOD</p> <p>CAFOD is a global charity rooted in Catholic social teaching principles. CAFOD's overall mission is to promote human dignity, social justice and sustainable development through partnerships, advocacy and aid. It works to empower communities, promote global</p>
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	<p>solidarity and address the root causes of poverty and inequality in a way that respects both people and the environment. CAFOD's work is based on the principle of solidarity – the idea that all people are interconnected and should work together for the common good. CAFOD (Catholic Agency for Overseas Development) is the official international development agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales. It works to fight poverty and promote sustainable development in the world's poorest communities. This includes providing emergency and humanitarian assistance during natural disasters and conflicts and supporting long-term development programs to address the root causes of poverty. CAFOD advocates for policies and actions that protect the rights and dignity of the poor and vulnerable. Education and advocacy are key parts of CAFOD's mission. The agency raises awareness about global poverty, injustice and the need for sustainable development. They encourage Catholics and others to become more active in advocating for social change through campaigns, lobbying and education. They also support sustainable development by helping communities build resilience against poverty and environmental challenges through programs focusing on improving agriculture, water access, healthcare and education. This aligns with the church's teaching on the care of creation and the environment. CAFOD works with local partners and communities to ensure that its programs are relevant, culturally appropriate and effective.</p> <p>Suggested learning activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Research a local Christian charity. Create a fact file of their aims and how these are put into practice. For greater challenge, learners could include Bible teachings to show examples of faith in action.
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1.3b Beliefs about life and death – Catholic Christianity

	Content Amplification	Teacher Guidance
1.3.1b Meaning of life in Catholic Christianity	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Catholic beliefs about the meaning of life:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to worship God; Romans 12:1 • teachings on loving God and others; Matthew 22:37-39 • St. Thomas Aquinas' Natural Law – the 5 primary precepts • spiritual growth and transformation as essential for understanding life's purpose; Luke 8:1-15 - Parable of the Sower. 	<p>For Catholics, the meaning of life is rooted in a relationship with God, living according to his will, and fulfilling his purpose. Catholics believe their primary purpose is <u>to worship God</u>, reflect his love and glorify him in all they do. This instruction can be found in Romans 12:1. For Catholics, life finds meaning in following Jesus, who provides an example of love, service and obedience to God. Through faith in him, Catholics seek eternal life and reconciliation with God. Catholics are also called to <u>love their neighbours</u>, serve others selflessly and build communities based on compassion and justice. There are many teachings in the Bible on loving God and others. For example, in Matthew 22:37-39, Jesus summarises the Ten Commandments into two important rules: to love God and to love others.</p> <p>St Thomas Aquinas' five primary precepts are fundamental moral principles that reflect natural law theory. They are intended to guide human behaviour according to reason and the pursuit of the common good. They are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>preservation of life</u> – The duty to protect and sustain human life. • <u>reproduction</u> – The natural drive to continue human existence through procreation. • <u>education</u> – The responsibility to educate and care for one's children. • <u>worship God</u> – The obligation to worship and seek a relationship with God. • <u>live in an ordered society</u> – The need to work for the common good and cooperate with others. <p>In Luke 18: 1-15, the Parable of the Sower teaches believers of the importance of being receptive to God's word. In the parable, the seed represents the word, and the different kinds of soil represent how the word is accepted.</p>

		<p>Path – The seed is eaten by birds, symbolising those who hear the word but fail to understand or accept it.</p> <p>Rocky ground – The seed grows quickly but withers due to shallow roots, representing people who initially accept the message but fall away due to hardship or lack of commitment.</p> <p>Thorny ground – The seed grows but is choked by worries and materialism, symbolising those who are distracted by worldly concerns and neglect the message.</p> <p>Good soil – The seed grows and produces a fruitful harvest, representing those who hear, understand and live out God's word.</p> <p>Suggested learning activity: Play a song with themes of growth or faith (e.g. 'Planting Seeds' by Lauryn Hill). Discuss the lyrics and how they relate to the parable. Encourage learners to create their own poem or short song about the parable.</p>
1.3.2b Catholic beliefs about life after death	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>The basis for Catholic belief in life after death:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John 3:16 • John 11: 25-26. <p>Catholic beliefs and teachings about life after death:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • heaven; John 14:1-4; Catechism of the Catholic Church 1022 • hell; Luke 12:4-5; 2 Thessalonians 1:5-9; Catechism of the Catholic Church 1023 • resurrection; Luke 16:19-3; John 11:24-27; 1 Corinthians 15: 20-22 and 1 Corinthians 15: 42-44 • beliefs about Purgatory; Catechism of the Catholic Church 1022; 1030. 	<p>Catholics believe there is an afterlife where the soul continues after the physical death. They believe they will receive Particular (Individual) Judgement from God at their death, who will decide on their eternal destiny (CCC 1022). They also believe in General Judgement which will occur on the Last Day. This is when Jesus will return to earth, called the Parousia (Second Coming), raise all the dead to life again, and judge all people. He will separate them into two groups, the saved and the lost, based on their response to those in need. This is explained in the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats. Belief in the sacrifice Jesus made for all people can bring salvation (John 3:16). In John's Gospel, Jesus made clear to his followers that belief in him was necessary for a place in heaven. (John 11:25-26)</p> <p><u>heaven</u> – Eternal union with God for those who have lived in grace and holiness (CCC 1023). There is plenty of room for all in heaven (John 14:1-4).</p>

	<p><u>purgatory</u> – A temporary state of purification for souls not fully ready for heaven. Purgatory is not a place of judgement, but a time of preparation for those souls going to heaven (CCC 1030).</p> <p><u>hell</u> – Eternal separation from God for those who die in unrepented mortal sin (CCC 1033). Luke 12:4-5 reminds believers that judgement lies with God. 2 Thessalonians 1:5-9 states that God is a fair and just God and will punish those who deserve it.</p> <p><u>resurrection</u> – Catholics believe in the resurrection of the dead, a core teaching of the faith. They believe that all people will be resurrected at the end of time (1 Corinthians 15:20-22, CCC1038). The faithful will be raised to eternal life with God, while others face judgement. The resurrected will receive glorified, imperishable bodies, free from pain, death or decay (1 Corinthians 15:42-44). This belief provides Catholics with hope and purpose.</p> <p>Luke 16:19-31 is the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, which teaches Christians that their actions in this life will impact their place in the afterlife.</p> <p>John 11:24-27 recounts the time when Jesus identifies himself as the source of both resurrection (life after death) and life in the present. Faith in Jesus grants eternal life, and through him, believers will experience resurrection.</p> <p>Suggested learning activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read through the biblical text of the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus. Discuss how the Rich Man's behaviour was unacceptable and suggest ways in which he could have behaved differently. How can this be placed into a modern-day context?
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<p>1.3.3b Catholic mourning and funeral practices</p>	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>The importance of mourning and funeral practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • committing a person's body to God • giving thanks to God for that person's life • celebrating and remembering the life of the deceased • using signs and symbols to express a deeper meaning • showing the link between this life and Catholic beliefs about the life after death. <p>Catholic mourning practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mass for the deceased • prayers recited for the deceased. <p>Catholic funeral practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vigil service • requiem mass • funeral service, hymns, prayers and eulogy • burial and the rite of committal. 	<p>Catholic funerals will always include a celebration and thanksgiving for the life of the person who has died. While it is often a sad occasion where people are grieving, there will be also be hope and trust in God. The body and the soul of the deceased is committed to God. There are symbols, prayers and readings that convey beliefs about eternal life. Catholic funerals reflect the link between this life and Catholic beliefs about life after death. For example, the service will express the hope of eternal life and the resurrection of the body on the Last Day. Catholic funerals emphasise that death is not the end, and through the mercy of God, the deceased is now at rest in God's eternal presence.</p> <p>When a Catholic dies, their family and friends will often ask for Mass to be celebrated in their memory. Catholics offer <u>Masses for the deceased</u> to pray for the souls in purgatory, asking God to grant them purification and eternal rest in heaven. This practice is rooted in the belief in the Communion of Saints, where the living can intercede for the deceased through prayer and good works. The Mass is the highest form of prayer in Catholicism, as it represents Christ's sacrifice on the cross. Offering Masses for the dead reflects love and hope for their salvation. Additionally, <u>special prayers are recited for the deceased</u>, such as the 'Eternal Rest' prayer, to commend the person's soul to God's mercy and pray for their peace in eternal life.</p> <p><u>vigil service</u>: This usually takes place the evening before <u>the funeral</u> and includes the Reception of the Body. It is a short service where the body of the deceased is received into the Church, with Bible readings and <u>prayers</u>. The coffin is then left in the Church overnight in readiness for the funeral the following day.</p> <p><u>requiem mass</u>: Usually, Catholics will have their funeral as part of a Mass. There is a great deal of symbolism, which expresses beliefs about the afterlife:</p>
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	<p>Sprinkling the coffin with holy water – this is a reminder of the holy water used in Baptism.</p> <p>The pall – the coffin is covered with a white cloth, a reminder of the baptism of the deceased, and that all are equal before God.</p> <p>Vestments – the priest will wear white as a reminder of the Resurrection of Jesus.</p> <p>Bible or Book of Gospels – this is placed on the coffin as a reminder that the deceased lived by the word of God and the teachings of Jesus.</p> <p>Cross or Crucifix – this is placed on the coffin as a reminder that, through Jesus' death and resurrection, humans can gain salvation and eternal life.</p> <p>Paschal Candle – this is placed beside the coffin as a symbol of belief in the Resurrection and all that it promises humans. Other candles are also used to represent Jesus as the Light of the World.</p> <p>Incense is used during the Mass to honour the person, as their body was a temple of the Holy Spirit. It also represents the prayers of the people present rising up to God.</p> <p><u>Bible readings</u> – these will be chosen to remind those present of the promise of resurrection and eternal life and will be a source of comfort and hope for those grieving.</p> <p><u>Eulogy</u> – a short speech given about the deceased person, where a relative or friend speaks about and celebrates their life.</p> <p><u>Hymns</u> will remind the congregation of the promise of salvation and eternal life.</p>
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1.4b Religious beliefs in contemporary society – Catholic Christianity

	Content Amplification	Teacher Guidance
<p>1.4.1b Catholic identity, belonging and practices</p>	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>The importance of expressing a sense of religious identity and belonging for Catholics, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • belonging to a worshipping community • shared sense of purpose and direction in life. <p>Catholic identity and belonging expressed through practices and symbolism – pilgrimage:</p> <p>Possible reasons for completing pilgrimage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • showing commitment to God as an act of religious devotion • learning more about Catholic figures by visiting sites associated with their lives • following in the footsteps of key figures in Catholicism • experiencing a sense of community • pilgrimage sites may be associated with miracles. <p>The role, significance and features of the following sites of Catholic pilgrimage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lourdes • St Peter's Basilica, Rome. <p>Catholic identity and belonging expressed through symbolic actions – rites of passage.</p>	<p>Through baptism, Catholics are called to a life of service to God and to others, assisted by the Holy Spirit. Belonging to the ‘Body of Christ’, the worship community, and meeting with them regularly can help a Catholic to strengthen their faith, grow spiritually and live out their relationship with God in fellowship with others. Catholics will often express belonging to their faith community on a daily basis, for example, blessing oneself with the sign of the cross, wearing a cross or crucifix or carrying a rosary. <u>Worship communities</u> provide opportunities for shared prayer, participation in the sacraments (especially the Eucharist), and mutual support in living out the Gospel. Believers can gain support from others within the community and receive advice and guidance on matters of morality or problems that can occur in life. They foster a sense of <u>belonging</u>, and help members serve others through acts of charity and social justice. It can provide a <u>shared sense of purpose and direction in life</u>, helping believers to achieve their telos; the ultimate goal of glorifying God and attaining eternal life with him in heaven.</p> <p>A pilgrimage is a special journey to a place of religious importance. There are many places of pilgrimage around the world, including Lourdes and St Peter’s Basilica, Rome. Catholics also view life as a pilgrimage, as their earthly life is moving towards heaven (CCC 769,1013).</p> <p>Lourdes is a Catholic place of pilgrimage in the south of France. Millions of pilgrims visit there every year to see the site of the vision of the Virgin Mary experienced by a young girl called Bernadette Soubirous, and to be healed by its miraculous waters. Christian pilgrims visit and pray in the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes and worship at the grotto where the vision is said to have taken place. Pilgrims light a candle when they pray for loved ones. They may also take part in the torchlight procession or pray the life-size Stations of the Cross.</p>

<p>The role, significance and features of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • baptism; Mark 1:9-11 • eucharist/communion; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 • first holy communion • confirmation; Acts 2:1-13. 	<p>Useful video clip: Lourdes Songs of Praise (era.org.uk)</p> <p>The Vatican is home to St. Peter's Basilica, built over the tomb of Saint Peter, the first pope. It is also the home of the current Pope, and the spiritual and administrative centre of the Catholic Church. Pilgrims may attend Mass, receive blessings from the Pope, and visit sacred sites such as the Sistine Chapel and the Vatican Museums. Many also pray at the tombs of saints, explore the history of the Church and reflect on their faith.</p> <p>There are other sites of Catholic pilgrimage that could be explored, such as Our Lady of the Taper in Cardigan, Holywell, Our Lady of Penrhys in the Rhondda Valleys, and Santiago de Compostela.</p> <p>Suggested learning activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research a Catholic place of pilgrimage and create a presentation to show why believers visit there and what they might do there. <p>Catholics are strengthened in their life of service through the sacraments. The sacraments are essential for Catholics as they are visible signs of God's grace, instituted by Christ to sanctify believers and strengthen their relationship with God. Through the seven sacraments – baptism, confirmation, eucharist, reconciliation, anointing of the Sick, matrimony, and Holy Orders – Catholics receive divine grace, grow in holiness, and participate in the life of the Church. The sacraments mark key moments in a Catholic's spiritual journey, fostering a deeper connection with God and the community of faith.</p> <p>Baptism is the first sacrament by which a person becomes a member of the Church, which originated at the baptism of Jesus. A person who is baptised is welcomed into the family of faith through the Holy Spirit. The Catholic Church usually baptises infants, although anyone</p>
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of any age can receive the sacrament. There are important symbols used within the ceremony of baptism which reflect key beliefs, including holy water, the oils of Chrism and Catechumens, the white garment, the candle and the sign of the cross.

Suggested video clip: [Christian Baptism - TrueTube](#)

Suggested learning activity:

- Debate – Learners could evaluate whether infants or adults should be baptised and give reasons for their views.

The Eucharist or Mass is the ‘source and summit of Christian life’ (CCC 1324), i.e. that it is both the foundation and the ultimate expression of Christian spiritual life. It was instituted by Jesus Christ at the Last Supper. Eucharist is a Greek word meaning ‘thanksgiving’ and Catholics believe it is an opportunity to celebrate and renew all that God has done through the death and resurrection of Jesus. Through the process of transubstantiation, Catholics believe that the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ when consecrated by the priest, and only the appearances of bread and wine remain. This means that Jesus is actually present in the bread and wine and they can receive him in a personal way. Unless a Catholic has received their ‘first holy communion’, where they will have attended special preparation classes to fully understand the meaning of the sacrament, they are unable to receive the Eucharist. The Catholic Church also teaches that a person must be in full communion with the Church in order to receive the sacrament. The Eucharist is spiritual food for the believer and it strengthens them to carry out their mission and vocation in the world.

Suggested learning activity:

- Read a Gospel account of the Last Supper. Now, use an inference grid to explore a piece of modern art depicting the Last Supper, for example ‘The Jesus Table’ by Sieger Köder. What links can learners make between the art work and the Gospel account?

		<p>Confirmation is the third sacrament of initiation and is usually preceded by a time of preparation and instruction in the faith. Confirmation allows a person to renew the vows made at baptism and to take on their Christian commitment for themselves. It is usually carried out by the bishop of the diocese, and Chrism oil is once again used in the ceremony as a reminder of the person's baptism. The bishop will perform the 'laying on of hands', an ancient sign to symbolise the coming down and entering of a person by the Holy Spirit, full of power and courage.</p> <p>Suggested learning activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the vows made by a confirmation candidate and identify what the vows mean and how they can be lived out in everyday life.
1.4.2b Catholicism and morality	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Catholic beliefs and teachings about how to make moral decisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> obeying divine commands such as the Ten Commandments; Exodus 20:1-17 St. Thomas Aquinas' Natural Law – the 5 primary precepts the Bible as a source of morality: Christian love (agape): Luke 10:25-37; Luke 13:34-35; forgiveness: Matthew 6:12; Matthew 18:21-22; Luke 23:34 and Matthew 5:43-44 the use of conscience to make moral decisions; 2 Corinthians 1:12. 	<p>For Catholics, defining 'right' or 'wrong' is directly linked to their faith. This means that deciding what is right and wrong is linked to the teachings of Christ, the teachings of the Church, the will of God, natural law and the order in the universe. Any act or action that goes against <u>the will of God</u> can be defined as 'wrong'. Catholics use their conscience, faith, the Bible and Church teaching when making important decisions and deciding if an act is right or wrong. Catholics believe that God has given them guidelines to help them understand morally right behaviour. For example, the <u>Ten Commandments</u>, or Decalogue, are found in the Old Testament (Exodus 20:1-17) and form the basis of all moral behaviour. Catholics will look to Mary, Mother of God, as an example and witness of hope, faith and love. (CCC 64, 148-149, 964). The Beatitudes are teachings by Jesus found in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:3-12), that describe the attitudes and qualities of a life blessed by God. They highlight the virtues of humility, mercy, justice, and faith, showing the path to true happiness and eternal life.</p>

St Thomas Aquinas' five primary precepts are fundamental moral principles that reflect natural law theory. They are intended to guide human behaviour according to reason and the pursuit of the common good:

- Preservation of life – The duty to protect and sustain human life.
- Reproduction – The natural drive to continue human existence through procreation.
- Education – The responsibility to educate and care for one's children.
- Seeking God – The obligation to worship and seek a relationship with God.
- Living in society – The need to work for the common good and cooperate with others.

The basis of Jesus' teachings is love. The word Jesus uses for 'love' comes from the Greek word 'agapè' and refers to the love God has for humans and the type of unselfish, compassionate love humans should show to others. This is illustrated in the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). For Catholics, this unconditional love means putting the well-being of others before your own. Catholics believe that Jesus' sacrifice on the cross was an ultimate example of agapè.

In Luke 13:34-35, Jesus is distressed due to the lack of love being shown among the people. He warns them of the consequences of this behaviour.

Suggested video clip: [Agape - Love - YouTube](#)

Suggested learning activities:

- Evaluate which is the most important source of morality for Catholics. For example, the Bible, Jesus' example, conscience, Church teaching.

- Ask learners to create a short video, TikTok or slideshow retelling the parable of the Good Samaritan in their own words or in a modern setting. Share and discuss the videos, focusing on how each retelling conveys the core message of the parable.

Forgiveness is an important concept, and Jesus refers to it many times, e.g. in parables, when asked questions about how his followers should behave, and even when he was being put to death (Luke 23:34). Jesus teaches that God is forgiving but that forgiveness of humans depends on whether people are willing and able to forgive others. This idea is referred to in the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:12). Forgiveness is challenging for believers, but Jesus extends the idea even further and links it to the notion of 'loving your enemy'. (Matthew 5:43-44). In the Catholic Church people can seek forgiveness as often as they need to through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Suggested learning activity:

- Research case studies on forgiveness and give reasons why the person involved could/could not forgive.

Some examples can be found here: [Examples of personal forgiveness - Forgiveness - GCSE Religious Studies Revision - WJEC - BBC Bitesize](#)

Suggested video clip: [Sacraments 101: Penance \(why we confess\) - YouTube](#)

The word **conscience** comes from the Latin words *con* meaning 'with' and '*scientia*' meaning 'knowledge'. Catholics believe that conscience is a God-given ability to know the difference between right and wrong (2 Corinthians 1:12) and part of being created *imago Dei*. While conscience is God's law written on the heart, Catholics believe they must make an effort to inform or educate their conscience so that they hear God's law when they are reflecting on

	<p>Morality and Divine judgement in the afterlife:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● treasures on earth and in Heaven; Matthew 6:19-21 and Luke 16:19-31● future judgement based on earthly actions; Matthew 25:31-46 - Parable of the Sheep and the Goats● Catechism of the Catholic Church 1022.	<p>their moral choices. The Church teaches that informing conscience is something that Catholics need to put effort into during their whole lifetime.</p> <p>As part of his <u>moral teachings</u>, Jesus spoke about how someone could be rewarded for their good actions and likened the reward to treasure in heaven (Matthew 6:19-21). He taught that doing good deeds was like making deposits into a spiritual treasury, where it is secure, safe from being stolen, losing value or being destroyed (Luke 16:19-31).</p> <p>In the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats, Jesus taught about General Judgement, which will take place on the Last Day. Jesus will return to earth in his Second Coming, or Parousia, and will judge all people according to their response to those in need while on earth (Matthew 25:31-46).</p> <p>Catholics also believe they will receive Individual Judgement at the moment of their death. God will judge their earthly actions and decide if they will spend all eternity in heaven or hell. Many souls spend time in purgatory as a place of cleansing from sin before going to heaven.</p> <p>Suggested learning activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Read the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats and make a list of the expectations of those who will be sent to heaven/hell. <p>Moral evil – This is suffering caused by human beings. Examples could include murder, rape, theft, violence, lying. Natural evil – This is suffering caused by natural events. Examples could include earthquakes, flooding, drought, hurricanes and tsunamis.</p>
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<p>Learners should have a basic understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what is meant by the problem of evil - what is meant by moral evil (caused by humans) and natural evil (caused by nature) • the philosophical challenges posed by belief in God and the existence of evil and suffering - the inconsistent triad • what a theodicy is, and how the Irenaean (soul-making) and Augustinian (soul-deciding) theodicies attempt to address the problem of evil. 	<p>Suggested learning activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research case studies of evil and suffering and decide if they are examples of moral or natural evil. <p>The presence of evil in the world sometimes causes people to question God's existence. JL Mackie identified the 'inconsistent triad', where he suggested that the following three (triad) things are inconsistent as they cannot all be true at the same time:</p> <p>He said that if God is omnipotent (all-powerful) and omni-benevolent (all-loving), then evil would not exist. However, we have experienced evil and know that it exists. Therefore, either God is not all-powerful because he cannot stop suffering, or he is not all-loving because he doesn't want to stop suffering. This dilemma is called the Problem of Evil.</p> <p>Suggested learning activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw a diagram to represent the Inconsistent Triad. <p>The word theodicy comes from two Greek terms: Theos – God and Dike – Justice. A theodicy attempts to justify the existence of an omnipotent and omni-benevolent God in the light of the existence of evil.</p> <p>Two early Church Fathers put forward their theodicies to try to explain the problem of evil. These are Saint Augustine and Saint Irenaeus.</p> <p>Saint Augustine believed that suffering was the fault of humans and angels who used their free will to turn away from God. Humans and angels are to blame for the suffering in the world not God. Augustine taught that God gives humans the chance to be forgiven for sin through Jesus's death on the cross. If humans turn back to God, then they will be in heaven (Soul-deciding theodicy).</p>
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		<p>Saint Irenaeus believed that God made mankind in his ‘image to grow into his likeness’. God allows humans to suffer so that humans grow to be more like him. God has given humans free will and we can make good or bad choices. Irenaeus believed that all humans will be in heaven (Soul-making theodicy).</p> <p>Suggested learning activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a Venn diagram to show the similarities and differences between the two theodicies mentioned above.
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Buddhism

1.5a Beliefs – Buddhism		
	Content Amplification	Teacher Guidance
1.5.1a Key beliefs and teachings in Buddhism	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Beliefs and teachings of Buddhism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no belief in a central deity or creator • the nature of existence: The Four Noble Truths: types of suffering (dukkha); the cause of suffering (tanha); enlightenment as the end of suffering (nirodha) • the path to liberation from suffering (magga) • the Noble Eightfold Path as a way to end suffering; Dhammapada 20. 	<p>Buddhism does not have a belief in a personal God in the same way that other religions do. They don't think it is relevant to think about Creation or a Creator; for them it is more important to live in the present, rather than consider how the universe might have begun. In general, Buddhists would say that questions about the creation of the universe are scientific.</p> <p>The Four Noble Truths are among the first teachings of the Buddha after he attained enlightenment. They set out the 'truth' about life – we all suffer (dukkha), we suffer because we want things (tanha), suffering can end (nirodha) when someone is enlightened. Buddhists believe that suffering marks everyone's existence as there are different types of suffering – mental and physical pain, feelings of dissatisfaction, frustrations, disappointments.</p> <p>The 4th Noble Truth is the path (magga) to end suffering. The path is known as the Noble Eightfold Path.</p> <p>The Noble Eightfold Path is a series of activities which can lead to the end of suffering and to enlightenment – "Of all the paths the Eightfold Path is the best" (Dhammapada 20 v.273)</p> <p>Explanation of the Four Noble Truths: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TK-MbNj83NM (BBC Radio 4, YouTube)</p> <p>Suggested Learning Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activating Prior Knowledge – identify ways in which people might suffer; what causes this suffering – natural events or own actions? • Think/pair/share – list some of the things that people want that they

	<p>The three sections of the Eightfold Path:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wisdom (panna) right understanding, right intention • morality (sila) right speech, right action, right livelihood • meditation (samadhi) right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration. 	<p>think will make them happy. What happens when that item doesn't make them happy?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw a chart with three headings: mental and physical pain, feelings of dissatisfaction, inability to accept change. Under each heading, give as many examples as possible. • Consider the quote "All of life is suffering" and explain what the Buddhists mean by this. Add own thoughts about the inevitability of suffering. • Create own learning mat of the Four Noble Truths. Include a glossary that defines the terms dukkha, tanha, nirodha and magga. <p>The Eightfold Path is split into three sections. There are no natural starting and end points, ideally Buddhists are engaging in all three sections at the same time.</p> <p>Wisdom</p> <p>Right understanding refers to an acceptance of Buddhist teachings and realising their influence on daily life.</p> <p>Right intention means doing things for the right reason. For Buddhists, thinking as well as action results in karma. Thinking negatively (e.g. hatred, greed and envy) will affect actions in a negative way. Purifying the mind of hatred, greed and envy will result in positive actions and an end to suffering. According to the law of karma, thoughts as well as actions have consequences.</p> <p>Morality</p> <p>Right speech means speaking in a way that has a positive impact so no lying, swearing or gossiping.</p> <p>Right action means acting in a way that is positive and doesn't cause harm e.g. not killing or injuring any living being (ahimsa), not stealing, not being unfaithful.</p>
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	<p>Right livelihood is choosing a job that is not harmful to others e.g., not selling weapons, meat, slaves or harmful drugs.</p> <p>Meditation</p> <p>Right effort is developing positive ways of thinking e.g. humble, generous or compassionate thoughts.</p> <p>Right mindfulness means to have a calm and peaceful state of mind. These qualities can be developed through right concentration (meditation practices).</p> <p>A detailed reading on the Noble Eightfold Path: http://oneminddharma.com/noble-eightfold-path/ (One Mind Dharma)</p> <p>Suggested Learning Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Quiz Quiz Trade to familiarise pupils with the eight steps and their meanings. Produce some cards with questions relating to each of the eight steps (e.g. What is meant by Right Livelihood). Other cards will have the answers to the questions (e.g. To ensure that Buddhists have jobs that do not harm themselves or others). Distribute cards to pupils who then walk around the classroom, asking their question to all they meet. The pupil with an answer card tells them their answer. When someone with a question card meets the person with the correct answer, they can 'bank' this and choose another question/answer card. They will come across the same questions and answers a number of times, so will become familiar with the information.Think of characters from soap operas/films who did not follow right speech, right action or right livelihood. Consider the impact of this on their lives and relationships.Look at each of the three sections in turn – analyse which section could be the most important to a Buddhist. Give reasons and make a judgement.Create a TikTok video summary, explaining the Eightfold Path, including the eight steps and their meanings.
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	<p>The Three Marks of Existence (Lakshanas):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • anicca – the concept of impermanence (Dhammapada 20) • anatta – the concept of no permanent self, using the Story of Nagasena and the Chariot as an example of the idea of the Five Skandhas (Dhammapada 113 and 279) • dukkha – dissatisfaction arising from an inability to accept anicca and anatta (Dhammadakkapayattana Sutta). <p>These are the features that exist in everyone's life:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing in life is permanent (anicca) so everything in the universe is in a state of flux. • There is nothing about a person that is permanent (anatta) due to the idea of people being made up of Five Skandhas which change throughout a person's life. Buddhists do not believe in a permanent soul that can move on to a new rebirth. The example of Nagasena and the Chariot is used to show that the separate individual parts do not make the chariot. • Everyone experiences dukkha (suffering, dissatisfaction, unsatisfactoriness) as a result of everything and everyone changing. This links in with the Noble Truths. Through following the Eightfold Path (magga), Buddhists can overcome wanting (tanha) things to be permanent and can end suffering (nirodha). <p>A version of the story of Nagasena and the Chariot: https://open.library.okstate.edu/introphilosophy/chapter/what-is-a-chariot/ (Davids, T. W. Rhys, trans. "The Chariot Simile." In <i>The Sacred Books of the East</i>, XXXV:43–44. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1890. https://www.sacred-texts.com/bud/sbe35/sbe3504.htm. This text is in the Public Domain)</p> <p>Suggested Learning Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read through the information on the Three Marks of Existence, summarise into 66 words or less. Complete the Extension Tasks (you might want to change the rubric for the final question to take into account the new specification) Three Marks of Existence or Lakshanas (WJEC) • Watch the video clip which covers the story of Nagasena and the Chariot. Explain why it is an effective way of explaining the concept of no permanent self (anatta).
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	<p>Buddhist beliefs and teachings about the Buddha (Siddhartha Gautama):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • early life: pre-birth, birth, prediction, life in palace • Four Sights: old age, sickness, death, holy man • renunciation: leaving palace, becoming ascetic • Enlightenment: seeing the world as it really is • revelation of the Dharma (Samyutta Nikaya) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Pass and Play</u> activity. Complete the main task and the Challenge Yourself activity. If you decide to use the Extension Task you will need to change the rubric to fit the new specification. • Persuasive writing task: produce a leaflet showing the relevance of dukkha, anicca and anatta in the 21st century <p>Stories about the pre-birth and birth events are meant to illustrate the uniqueness of the Buddha. The prediction made highlights the belief that he was destined to become enlightened in this lifetime: many Buddhists believe that Gautama was a bodhisattva (buddha-to-be) in a previous life. His life in the palace highlights the blinkered world people live in before they accept things as they really are.</p> <p>The Four Sights are the catalyst for Gautama leaving behind his past life. Seeing old age, sickness and death made him realise the lakshanas – everything changes (anicca), there is no permanent self (anatta) and everyone suffers.</p> <p>Renunciation is important for all people who want to follow the teachings of the Buddha. Some people become monks so might give up their home and live more regimented lives, but extreme ascetism is not a feature of Buddhism. Lay people might renounce their previous way of life or beliefs when they become a Buddhist.</p> <p>Buddha is viewed as an inspiration to people who believe that they, too, can become enlightened.</p> <p>After attaining Enlightenment, Buddha decided to share his dharma (teachings) with others. For many Buddhists this shows his unselfish nature in trying to help others in trying to experience the ineffable nature of enlightenment.</p>
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		<p>Suggested Learning Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch the video and make notes about the important aspects of the life of the Buddha. (The Life of the Buddha animation by lathrios, YouTube) The first activity might be too basic for some pupils so it might be more suitable to move on the Extension Tasks and the Questions to Consider (WJEC). Use a search engine to find pictures that illustrate the main aspects of the Buddha's life. Write short descriptions of what can be seen in each picture, making sure they are in chronological order. Analyse and evaluate which part of the Buddha's life was most important (i.e. his birth or life in the palace or the Four Sights or renunciation or being an ascetic or Enlightenment).
1.5.2a Buddhist belief in action	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Key Buddhist beliefs and teachings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> dana: generous giving (Ittivuttaka 26) karuna: compassion due to all living things being interdependent metta: loving-kindness. "My religion is very simple, My religion is kindness." (Dalai Lama). 	<p>Bhikkhus (monks) are reliant on <u>dana</u> (generosity) from lay people whose donations help with the upkeep of monasteries and with food for monks. A lay person gains merit (punya) when giving dana. It is the donor who thanks the recipient for giving them the opportunity to accrue positive karma.</p> <p><u>Karuna</u> is an attitude to others that relies on recognising that everyone suffers and are connected.</p> <p><u>Metta</u> (loving-kindness) is about respect for the lives of others and showing that respect by being kind and considerate. During loving-kindness meditation (mettabhavana) Buddhists try to cultivate feelings of kindness for all beings.</p> <p>Suggested Learning Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pass the Mind-Map – give each pupil a sheet of paper and a coloured pen/pencil. In the middle of the sheet write dana or karuna or metta (these words can be used on multiple sheets). When activity starts each learner must write a fact/key point/keyword/example/information about that topic. Then they swap with someone close by. Keep doing this until all pupils have written on more than 5 sheets.

	<p>Contemporary local or national examples of Buddhist faith and belief in action – community work and faith-based activism.</p> <p>How the aims and work of the Karuna Trust reflect Buddhist beliefs in action.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct learners to re-read the comments and add a justification/opposition to any one of them. When the sheet returns to the first person, they can question the person who has made a judgement. Listen to the judgements made, vote on the strongest/most relevant. <p>Samye Foundation Wales is a mindfulness centre based in Cardiff. They are involved in the Mother Earth Group.</p> <p>Lam Rim Centre is a retreat centre at Raglan, Usk. They are involved in environmental issues.</p> <p>SGI-UK is Buddhism in action for peace. They are also involved in climate change issues. They have small groups across Wales, which can be found by entering an area at https://sgi-uk.org/Local-Community.</p> <p>Karuna (also known as the Karuna Trust) is a small group of Buddhists in the UK who fundraise to help ease the suffering of communities in India. They put Buddhist practices in action – actively showing karuna (compassion), living according to the principles of right livelihood with an ethical purpose and providing a framework for spiritual practice. They also aim for their work to be economically and globally sustainable.</p> <p>Suggested Learning Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose one of the groups above (Samye Foundation Wales, Lam Rim Centre or SGI-UK). Research their beliefs, teachings and actions. Produce a one-sided information sheet/infographic • Work in groups of 3 (or groups of 4 or more so that less confident learners can work together). Go to the website of Karuna (the Karuna Trust) https://karuna.org. Scroll down to the section called 3 Areas of Focus (Education for All, Sustainable Livelihoods, Gender Equality). Allocate one area to one member of the group to focus on. Read through the information on the webpage and make notes in preparation for a speaking task. At the end of the allocated time, each member of the group talks about their focus.
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Written task – explain how each of these three areas illustrate Buddhist beliefs in action (refer back to elements of the Eightfold Path, the Marks of Existence and teachings about dana, karuna and metta). |
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1.6a Beliefs about life and death – Buddhism

Content Amplification		Teacher Guidance
1.6.1a Meaning of life in Buddhism	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Buddhist beliefs about the meaning of life:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • achieving enlightenment (Nirvana) through the Eightfold Path and other teachings • cultivating wisdom, ethical conduct, and mental discipline • understanding the nature of suffering and its causes. 	<p>Enlightenment is the goal of most Buddhists and can be achieved by following the steps of the Eightfold Path, accepting teachings such as the marks of existence, building up good karma and having a positive rebirth. Life does not end once a person is enlightened, but enlightenment happens once suffering (dukkha) no longer has an impact.</p> <p>The three parts of the Eightfold Path are essential for moving a person towards enlightenment. <u>Wisdom</u> is the awareness of the Buddhist path and why a person needs to follow it; <u>ethical conduct</u> leads to better relationships, encouraging people not to harm (ahimsa); <u>mental discipline</u> includes developing meditational skills to contemplate the teachings and one's own motivations.</p> <p>For Buddhists “all life is suffering” as it marks everyone’s lives. Suffering can be interpreted in many ways including dissatisfaction and unsatisfactoriness. Most instances of suffering might be minor niggles that affect daily life. Even times of happiness (sukkha), are tainted by dukkha as life might not be exactly what people want. The cause of dukkha is craving/wanting things (tanha) – this can include wanting life or people to stay the same, or being attached to one’s own opinions and being unwilling to deviate from them.</p> <p>Videos on dukka/suffering – How to Overcome Suffering – Understanding Dukkha (@BuddhaMotivation-in English, YouTube) Understanding Dukkha – (@OntologicalOddysey, YouTube)</p> <p>Suggested Learning Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sorting cards – have 8 cards with the titles of each of the eight steps, 8 cards with a description of each step. In pairs/groups match them up.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divide class into 8 groups. Write each of the 8 steps on A3 paper (8 sheets of paper). First group writes a definition of that step before moving onto the next step. The second group adds to/adapts the first definition and moves on to the next step. Following groups move to the next steps, jotting down what that step would entail. • Give me 5 activity – e.g., 5 parts of the Eightfold Path, 4 examples of right livelihood, 3 sections of the Eightfold Path, 2 types of dukkha, 1 aim of meditation. • Listen to the three types of suffering (The 3 Types of Suffering from Learning Buddhism in English with Dhammadharini). • Construct an analyse and evaluate answer. Before sharing with pupils, you will need to amend the box in the bottom right corner to account for changes from the last specification. https://resource.download.wjec.co.uk/vtc/2016-17/16-17_2-5/pdf/SC-and-FC-pass-and-play-suffering.pdf (WJEC).
1.6.2a Buddhist beliefs about life, death and rebirth	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Buddhist beliefs about life, death and rebirth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the concept of karma (Dhammapada 1:1 and 1:2) • the cycle of samsara (Dhammapada 1:16) • the concept of rebirth (Dhammapada 1:17) • achieving Nirvana • different realms of existence • the views of the Triratna tradition on ‘moment-to-moment rebirth’. 	<p>Karma is the belief that intentions and actions have consequences. Buddhists believe that accruing positive karma will result in a better rebirth.</p> <p>The cycle of samsara is the cycle of birth, death and rebirth. The effects of karma created in one life is experienced in the next life. Buddhists believe that they can end this cycle once they achieve enlightenment.</p> <p>Buddhists do not believe in a permanent soul that moves on from one life to another, so is different from reincarnation. For them, consciousness (one of the Five Precepts) that has been conditioned by karma is reborn into the cycle of samsara.</p> <p>Popular metaphors used to explain causation and rebirth include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the flame of a candle being used to light a new candle yet they are not the same flame; • the relationship between milk and yogurt; yogurt is dependent on milk, but they are not the same product. • a film strip appears to be continuous action yet if slowed to each individual still, one moment disappears and the next appears. Each

still is dependent on the one that came before and influences the one that comes next.

Nirvana is the state of peace and joy that happens once one has achieved nirodha (ended craving). To achieve nirvana, Buddhists need to put the teachings of the Buddha (dharma) into action and overcome the Three Poisons (greed, hatred, ignorance). The Buddha achieved nirvana at his enlightenment. Achieving nirvana does not mean that a person's life ends nor that the person feels nothing afterwards: it is a state of peace and happiness.

The Tibetan Wheel of Life sets out the different realms of existence in samsara. It is a visual way to show how each existence is dependent on the previous one. It also shows how craving (tanha) leads to the cycle of samsara starting again.

Triratna is a form of Western Buddhism which has adapted beliefs from more traditional forms of Buddhism. They put forward the idea that rebirth happens throughout someone's life through the development of insight and the death of the idea of a permanent self, a person is reborn spiritually. Rebirth happens every day because everyone and everything is constantly changing (anicca) so no-one remains the same person throughout their life.

Suggested Learning Activities:

- Listen to a Buddhist monk explain rebirth ([What is rebirth? By SGC](#)).
- What happens/what happens next activity. Give pupils certain scenarios – they decide whether it leads to positive, negative or neutral karma. They think about what might happen as a result, and whether it is positive, neutral or negative. Examples of scenarios could be you lie too long in the sun, you have toothache, but don't go to the dentist, you tidy your bedroom without being asked, you hit someone at school, you cook your family a meal, you help an elderly person across the road.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy activity – pupils read through the sources of wisdom from the Dhammapada (1:1, 1:2, 1:16, 1:17). Firstly, summarise the individual passages, secondly explain how they inspire Buddhists. • Visual activity – show pupils pictures that illustrate the metaphors used to demonstrate causation and rebirth. Pupils choose one and write the script for a short reel that describes the image and explains how it explains rebirth. • Visual activity – show pupils a picture of the Tibetan Wheel of Life. In pairs, describe what can be seen – they can be directed to look at the centre, the 5 or 6 realms of existence, the 12 stages of inter-dependence, or outside of the wheel. • Computer activity – use BBC Religion & Ethics – In pictures to focus in on each section of the Wheel of Life which show the different realms of existence. Write an explanation of the symbolism of the imagery in the Wheel (each section of the wheel is focused on at the bottom of the article).
1.6.3a Buddhist practices	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>The importance of mourning and funeral practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transferring 'merit' to the deceased person • using symbols to express meaning • showing the link between this life and a future life • remembering that death is not the end of life, but a stage of life between existence and rebirth • celebrating and remembering the life of the deceased. 	<p>Rituals during mourning and funerals are ways for the family of the deceased to have a positive influence on their rebirth. Some Buddhists believe that it is possible to donate their positive karma so that the deceased will have a better rebirth. This transfer is motivated by generosity and is done through positive thoughts. Paradoxically, if this act is truly unselfish, it can result in more positive karma for the giver. Rituals might include monks chanting for the deceased for 7 days, washing the body of the deceased, sprinkling scented water on to the right hand of the deceased to symbolise the transfer of merit (positive karma).</p> <p>Video: Transference of Merits to Departed Relatives (Buddhist chant) by The Oracle Café</p> <p>White thread is used to tie the deceased's hands and feet. Monks hold the ends of the thread which are outside the coffin as the body is taken to be cremated. Buddhists believe that maintaining this contact with the monks allows the deceased to be linked to the monks' energy and merit.</p>

A monk visits the family's home 6 days after the funeral to give a sermon about anicca (impermanence). This shows that death is just a stage in the cycle of samsara and that the deceased might be reborn.

Be aware that many websites and online videos use the term 'reincarnation' when referring to Buddhist belief in life after death. The correct term is 'rebirth' as Buddhists do not believe that there is a permanent self or soul that is born into a new body.

Suggested Learning Activities:

- Quiz Quiz Trade to familiarise pupils with the various mourning and funeral practices. Produce some cards with questions relating to mourning and funeral practices (e.g. Why is scented water sprinkled on the hand of the deceased?) Other cards will have the answers to the questions (e.g. To symbolise the transfer of merit). Distribute cards to pupils who then walk around the classroom, asking their question to all they meet. The pupil with an answer card tells them their answer. When someone with a question card meets the person with the correct answer, they can 'bank' this and choose another question/answer card. They will come across the same questions and answers a number of times, so will become familiar with the information.
- Describe and explain the importance of the mourning and funeral practices.
- Post-It Notes – pupils answer any 3 of the following prompts: 2 things I'd like to know more about, 1 thing I know now that I didn't know before, 2 things I will definitely remember, 1 thing that surprised me, 2 questions I'd like to ask, 1 way I could improve my work, 2 sentences that would summarise this lesson. Stick them into book/folder and re-visit at the end of the next section.

<p>Buddhist mourning and funeral practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mahayana mourning and funeral practices – Japanese and Tibetan • Japanese practices – chanting, giving the deceased a new name, cremating the body and burying the ashes • Tibetan practices – use of the Tibetan Book of the Dead, cremation, sky burial, giving offerings and offering food to the deceased • Theravada mourning and funeral practices – monks chanting, sprinkling water, tying the deceased's hands and feet, placing monks' robes on the coffin and cremation. 	<p>There are different schools within Buddhism. Theravada (Tradition of the Elders) is the most traditional and generally found in South Asia. Mahayana (the Great School) tends to be more universal and more likely to be found in eastern Asian countries. Tibetan Buddhism is sometimes placed under the Mahayana umbrella but has many unique beliefs and practices.</p> <p>Generally, Mahayana practices are like those of Theravada Buddhists. Mourners chant for 7 days, then weekly for 7 weeks. It is believed that it takes 49 days for the deceased's karma to be channelled into their rebirth.</p> <p>Japanese practices include the priest leading mourners in chanting a passage from the Buddhist teachings. The deceased is given a new name to prevent them from returning to earth any time their name is called. The body is cremated which symbolises freeing the spirit from the body and allowing it to transition to another world. Special chopsticks are used to sift through the bones which can be seen as gathering luck, strength, wisdom or healing. These are then placed into an urn which will be buried, giving family members a place to pay their respects.</p> <p>Tibetan practices include using the Book of the Dead which is often read to the person who is dying and explains the stages that they will go through on their journey to the next life. The time between one life and the next (bardo) can take a moment or up to 49 days. The Book of the Dead sets out how a person's karma determines what their next life might be like, showing that their own actions lead to the type of life they will have in the future. Tibetan funerals might be a cremation or a sky burial, where the body is taken to a place on a mountain. The body is cut into pieces and fed to vultures as a symbol of impermanence (anicca) and how all things are dependent on each other (interrelatedness).</p>
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Suggested Learning Activities:

- Computer activity – [Practices in Buddhism \(Death & Mourning BBC Bitesize\)](#).
[Japan Experience](#) – search for ‘Understanding and attending a Japanese funeral’.
- Read through the information. In pairs, discuss what you think are the main points. Produce a learning mat with information about mourning practices and funeral customs in Japanese and Tibetan Buddhism (Mahayana) and Theravada Buddhism. This can be used as a revision aid and to help with answering possible exam questions.
- Discuss in pairs or groups whether funerals have any meaning in Buddhism.
- Analyse and evaluate – devise an AO3 question on funerals in Buddhism.

1.7a Religious beliefs in contemporary society – Buddhism

Content Amplification	Teacher Guidance
<p>1.7.1a Buddhist identity, belonging and practices</p> <p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>The importance of expressing a sense of identity and belonging in Buddhism, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • belonging to a Buddhist community – the sangha • having a shared sense of purpose, morality and direction in life. <p>Buddhist identity and belonging expressed through devotional practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The practices and significance of three different types of meditation: samatha, vipassana and metta bhavana; Dhammapada 282 • The practices and significance of chanting; Dhammapada 190 • The uses and significance of using malas, mantras and mandalas. 	<p>The term 'sangha' can refer to just the community of monks or to all Buddhists (lay and monastic). The sangha is one of the three jewels (with Buddha and dharma) that has been responsible for maintaining Buddhist traditions for over 2,000 years.</p> <p>As Buddhists, people are expected to follow the teachings of the Buddha. The Eightfold Path sets out the way that they should live so they share the same moral ideals and are all ultimately aiming to become enlightened.</p> <p>Suggested Learning Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview a classmate about the various groups that they are part of. Ask questions such as: What values do you share? What customs do you keep? Which places are important to you? How do you show that you belong to that group? • In pairs, look at a picture of the sangha (PXHere – free to use). Answer the same questions as above. Some answers can be gleaned from previous study. <p>Buddha meditated before he was enlightened, and it is also set out in the Eightfold Path, so meditation is seen as important for all Buddhists. Meditation can be performed individually or as a group.</p> <p><u>Samatha</u> is breathing meditation and is often performed when focusing on a particular object.</p> <p><u>Vipassana</u> is insight meditation where the person reflects on their motivations.</p> <p><u>Metta bhavana</u> is loving-kindness meditation where the person aims to develop loving feelings for all, even their enemies.</p>

Chanting is when Buddhists repeat a mantra such as '*Om mani padme hum*' ('Praise to the jewel of the Lotus') which can be chanted to develop compassion and wisdom, or '*Nam myoho renge kyo*' ('I take refuge in the Lotus') which might be used to overcome difficulties in life. The 'Lotus' is the Lotus Sutra – a Mahayana scripture. They might also chant the Triratna to align with the Buddha, dharma and sangha.

Malas are like prayer beads and are used when chanting to help Buddhists concentrate. The number of beads is usually symbolic.

Mantras are chants (see above).

Mandalas are intricate designs that are often made with sand or rice and can be an aid to concentration and mindfulness. Once the mandala has been completed it is destroyed to remind them that everything is impermanent (anicca).

Suggested Learning Activities:

- Watch video: [How to meditate like a Buddhist monk \(BBC\)](#). Write a list of instructions for someone who is meditating for the first time.
- Watch video: [Tina Turner Chanting: Nam Myoho Renge Kyo \(Soka Gaikai\)](#). Write a review of why and how this Buddhist convert chants.
- Watch video: [Traditional Tibetan Sand Mandala Time Lapse \(Gustavus Adolphus College\)](#). Describe what the process e.g., First ..., then ..., next ..., later ..., finally.
- Write an answer to explain why it is important to wipe away the pattern and collect up the sand at the end of the process.

<p>Buddhist identity and belonging expressed through symbolic actions – pilgrimage.</p> <p>Possible reasons for completing pilgrimage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • showing respect to the Buddha for his dharma and example • learning more about Buddhas and Bodhisattvas by visiting sites associated with their lives. 	<p>Many Buddhists might take part in pilgrimage, but it is not obligatory. It is seen as part of puja (worship). They might visit as an individual or as part of a group, but it is a way of expressing their belief in the central role of Buddha.</p> <p>During the last discourse before his death, Buddha suggested that going on a pilgrimage could be a way to make spiritual development. Ananda, the Buddha's chief follower, was worried that the community would find it challenging to maintain their faith without the Buddha. The Buddha's advice was to visit specific places that had been associated with him in order to help them practice as if he was still living with them. During pilgrimage, Buddhists aim to deepen their connection, devotion and commitment to the Buddha and his teachings (dharma). For Buddhists making the journey to a place of pilgrimage is an act of taking refuge in the Three Jewels (Buddha, Dharma and Sangha) by deepening their connection to the Buddha and his teachings, and the community (sangha) which works to be enlightened. Pilgrimage also offers the opportunity to purify karma, cultivate merit and connect with other pilgrims. Buddhists might undertake a pilgrimage at Wesak or Parinirvana Day as these days celebrate important times in the life and death of the Buddha.</p> <p>When undertaking a pilgrimage, Buddhists will visit and pay homage to sacred sites or relics dedicated to Buddha or a Bodhisattva. During the pilgrimage, Buddhists will often walk around and prostrate in front of statues. One of the aims of pilgrimage is to lessen arrogance and bring their body and mind into harmony. They will pay respect to the Buddha and bodhisattva by making offerings, chanting mantras and meditating. The Buddha and bodhisattvas aid meditation by providing a focus to concentrate on, act as inspiration, and guidance. Buddha rupas (images of Buddha or bodhisattva) are used to depict various aspects of the Buddha's life or symbols of Buddhist teachings e.g., an image of Buddha with elongated ear lobes represent his life as a prince, while an image with a top-knot shows his wisdom and his enlightenment. Hand gestures (mudras) symbolise aspects of his teachings. At Mahayana sites, there</p>
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The role, significance and features of the following sites of Buddhist pilgrimage:

- Bodh Gaya
- Lumbini.

might be images of bodhisattvas (beings who have attained enlightenment but who aim to help others also achieve it). Their rupas tend to emphasise qualities of compassion. In China, pilgrims visit mountain sites that are associated with different bodhisattvas; in Japan pilgrims can visit the Daibutsu (Great Buddha), a statue of the bodhisattva Amida who is believed to have created the Pure Land, a place where they believe they can go in the next life to follow the dharma and attain enlightenment.

Bodh Gaya is believed to be the site where Buddha was enlightened. The temple at Bodh Gaya is a UNESCO World Heritage Site as it is seen to have both religious and architectural value. Buddhists visit as part of their religious discipline and to express their religious devotion.

Lumbini is believed to be the site where Gautama was born. Pilgrims perform rituals at the sight e.g., circumambulation (walking around the temple), meditation, chanting, making offerings. The pilgrimage can unite Buddhists in their spiritual journey and allow them to feel closer to their religion and the Buddha.

Suggested Learning Activities:

- Rank reasons for and against going on a pilgrimage
https://resource.download.wjec.co.uk/vtc/2016-17/16-17_2-5/eng/pilgrimage-ranking.html (WJEC).
- Consider the importance of pilgrimage.
https://resource.download.wjec.co.uk/vtc/2016-17/16-17_2-5/pdf/FC-buddhism-pilgrimage.pdf (WJEC).

<p>1.7.2a Buddhism and morality</p>	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Buddhist beliefs and teachings about how to make moral decisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Five Precepts as basic rules for everyday life • avoidance of the Three Poisons – greed, ignorance and hatred • the Six Paramitas (perfections) – generosity, morality, patience, energy, meditation and wisdom. <p>The connection between karma, rebirth and morality in Buddhism.</p>	<p>The Five Precepts are guidelines for all Buddhists (lay and monastic). Links can be made with the Morality section of the Eightfold Path e.g. first precept with right action, fourth precept with right speech. Some people see the Precepts as actions that Buddhists should not do, while other people see them as promoting positive behaviour e.g. not taking what has not been given can mean 'do not steal' but could also be promoting honesty and integrity.</p> <p>The Three Poisons can be overcome by following the dharma. They are depicted at the centre of the Wheel of Life (pig as ignorance, cockerel as greed, snake as hatred) to show how these three characteristics drive samsara and rebirth into a world of suffering. It is only when a Buddhist overcomes these 'poisons' that they can be enlightened and escape samsara.</p> <p>The Six Paramitas are the foundation of Mahayana Buddhism. They are the essential qualities that need to be cultivated on the path to enlightenment. Although they are 'perfections', a Buddhist does not need to be perfect to practice them. They promote qualities of loving-kindness, compassion, honesty, integrity, being calm and composed, overcoming bad habits, meditative concentration, and seeing things as they really are.</p> <p>There are lots of connections within Buddhism. Developing morality (through following the Eightfold Path, the Five Precepts and the Six Paramitas) allows a Buddhist to accrue good merit or karma. Positive karma leads to a better rebirth which allows a Buddhist to get closer to their aim of nirvana/enlightenment and freedom from the cycle of samsara.</p> <p>Suggested Learning Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play a game of cause and effect – action and karma (WJEC). • Think of a favourite character from a reality TV programme. Write their name at the centre of a page. Around their name, jot down the names of other characters that they are linked with (friends, in a
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relationship with etc.) Now indicate any of their relationships that have been affected by greed, hatred or ignorance – use different colours to represent each of the three poisons. In bold writing, note the results of these ‘poisons’.

- Draw a chart with three columns. The first column contains each of the Five Precepts (to abstain from taking life, to abstain from taking what is not given, to abstain from sexual misconduct, to abstain from false speech, to abstain from intoxicants that cloud the mind). In the second column, write what each means e.g., to not kill etc. In the third column, list the precept as a positive action e.g., treat all living beings with kindness.
- Read through the information on the [Six Paramitas](#). Draw out a spider diagram to show what each one is, and what it entails.
- Print out a [sheet of hexagons](#) for pupils to write in a number of key concepts from across the course or set up one for the class. Cut out and give out for solo/pair/group work. Pupils to group hexagons together according to the connections they can make. They can move the hexagons as many times as they want as they realise the connectedness of aspects of the course.

Hinduism

1.5b Beliefs – Hinduism		
	Content Amplification	Teacher Guidance
1.5.1b Key religious beliefs and teachings in Hinduism	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Beliefs and teachings about the nature of God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brahman as one God with many forms; Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (391) • Brahman as the universal soul or spirit, source of all life and in all things (Antaryami); Katha Upanishad 5:2; Chandogya Upanishad 3:14.1 • Brahman as Bhagavan • Nirguna Brahman and Saguna Brahman • nature and role of the Trimurti; Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva; Kurma Purana 1:6, 1:9, 1:26 • the concept of avatar; Bhagavad Gita 4:5, 7-8, with reference to Vishnu - Rama (The Perfect Man) and Krishna (the Divine Statesman) • the role and importance of other gods and goddesses to Hindus – Durga, Ganesh and Saraswati. <p>Hindu beliefs and teachings about relationship between Brahman and atman (soul):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the atman as unchanging, indestructible and eternal; identical to the souls of all things (Advaita Vedanta); Bhagavad Gita 2:12, 2:17, 18:61 - similar to salt in water • the atman is Brahman's creation, Brahman is all-knowing, all powerful but the soul is distinct from Brahman (Dvaita Vedanta) - like a tear and salt water (separate entities). 	<p>As a starting point, it would be useful for learners to be aware that there are a variety of views and ideas within Hinduism. There are two main traditions of Vaishnavism and Shaivism. There are clear differences with the gods they follow, the way they worship and some of their practices. It would also be useful for learners to be aware that Hinduism is different in many ways to other religions as it is a lifestyle that was practiced in the Indus Valley region which was given the name Hinduism by the Western world. It is the main religion followed in India with many of its beliefs and practices incorporated into daily life.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners will need to understand the nature of God (Brahman) for Hindus. They will need to be aware that there are many teachings and beliefs about the nature of Brahman and they are recorded in a range of their Holy books including the Upanishads, Puranas and the Bhagavad Gita. • They will need to understand what the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad has to say about the nature of Brahman. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad is one of the oldest Upanishads and focused on the nature of reality and the identity of the atman (self). It states that Brahman exists but is yet unknowable as it has not qualities and characteristics. It is based on the concept of "neti-neti" (not this not that). This Upanishad also shows that although there are many deities (gods) with individual qualities, they are all aspects of Brahman, there is only one true God, Brahman. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (391) describe the nature of many possible deities and how they relate to different aspects of Brahman. This is told through a conversation between Vidagdha and Yajnavalkya often known as 'the three and three thousand gods'.

<p>The use and importance of sacred texts in daily life:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">the Upanishads and the Vedas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Learners will need to understand that the Katha Upanishad and the Chandogya Upanishad speak of Brahman as universal soul or spirit, source of all life and in all things. They emphasise that Brahman is everywhere (Katha Upanishad 5.2) and that all life comes from, is sustained by and goes back to Brahman. As a result of this a person should meditate and consider what they desire in life (Chandogya Upanishad 3:14.1).Hindus see Brahman as the Ultimate Reality often known as Bhagavan.There are two ways of seeing Brahman either as Nirguna or Saguna Brahman. Nirguna Brahman means that Brahman is outside time and space, Brahman has no form and is present within all living things. Whereas Saguna Brahman, means Brahman with a form, identity and purpose which can vary. Hindus who believe in Saguna Brahman make use of the deities to help them understand Brahman.The nature and role of the Trimurti is important for learners to understand:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Brahma the creator god who represents the creation of the universe and the source of all creation.Vishnu the preserver and protector god who sustains the creation until it can no longer be sustained.Shiva the destroyer god who destroys the universe when it no longer can be maintained for Brahma to re-create it.The Kurma Purana talks about the creation of the universe and the roles of the Trimurti within it.Learners will need to understand the importance of the concept of the avatar within the Vaishnavite tradition of Hinduism. Vishnu is the god that is associated with avatars. He has a total of 10 avatars which come to the earth to help humanity at time of great need. The Bhagavad Gita focuses on Krishna as an avatar of Vishnu in a conversation with Arjuna on the need to fulfil one's duty above all else. As part of this Krishna emphasises that he is
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an incarnation of Brahman and attempts to help Arjuna with his understanding of Brahman (Bhagavad Gita 4.5., 7-8). Learners will need a clear understanding of two of the avatars of Brahman:

- Rama (the perfect man)
 - Krishna (the Divine Statesman)
- Learners will need to understand the importance of other gods and goddesses. These are noted as:
 - The goddess Durga – the protective mother of the universe
 - The god Ganesh – the remover of obstacles and god of prosperity and wisdom
 - The goddess Lakshmi – the goddess of wealth, fortune and prosperity.
 - Learners will also need to understand the beliefs and teachings about the relationship between Brahman and the atman. They will need to understand that the atman is unchanging, indestructible and eternal and all atman's are identical for all living things (Advaita Vedanta). To assist with this, learners can make use of stories such as, the salt and the water story which explains just like salt in water, it is there but you cannot see it. The atman is in every living thing.
 - Learners will also need to understand that the atman is Brahman's creation and that Brahman is all-knowing and all-powerful, but the atman is distinct from Brahman. Advaita Vedanta recognises that the atman and Brahman are separate from each other and non-interchangeable. Brahman is superior to the atman and is perfect in all aspects. Brahman's atman is independent and all other atmans depend on Brahman.
 - How Hindus make use of and the importance of their sacred texts in daily life. Consideration here needs to be given to the Upanishads and the Vedas. Learners could consider:
 - How are they used in worship?
 - How are they used to guide them in their lives?

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are the different books made use of? • How are they a source of spiritual guidance? • How are they a source of inspiration and creativity? <p>Suggested learning activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners could explore the different teachings about the nature of Brahman and create a summary of the different beliefs about the nature of Brahman • Learners could create a summary of the roles and importance of the different gods and goddesses • Learners could create a resource to identify a glossary of key terms that are useful for the content in this part of the specification – this could be done as a quiz, matching activity or simply key word cards • Learners could draw a summary of the relationship between Brahman and atman to show how they are linked but are also separate at the same time, e.g. using a Venn diagram • Learners could create a mind map of the importance of the Upanishads and Vedas to recognise the differing ways that they are of importance to Hindus • Learners could create a summary infographic of the main beliefs and teachings in Hinduism held by Hindus – use lines to show the links between them.
1.5.2b Hindu belief in action	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Key Hindu beliefs and teachings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dana: generous giving • karma yoga: selfless action • seva: selfless service. <p>Contemporary local or national examples of Hindu faith and belief in action – community work and faith-based activism.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners need an understanding of how Hindus put their belief into action. They will need to understand key beliefs and teachings prior to considering contemporary local or national examples of Hindu faith and belief in action. • The key beliefs that should be studied are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dana: generous giving. This is part of a Hindu's dharma (duty). It is a virtue to be generous and to show charity. By helping others they are helping Brahman as all living things contains something of Brahman within them.

	<p>How the aims and work Sewa International reflect Hindu beliefs in action.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• karma yoga: selfless action. The concept of action without any attachment to the result of the action.• seva: selfless service. Hindus should give selflessly without expectation of reward because it is the right things to do.• Hindus due to their belief in ahimsa (non-violence) will often support environmental charities, as well as looking after people and animals.• The aim is not to collect good karma by showing charity but instead to gain good karma because of showing charity.• Learners may like to explore local Welsh and national examples of Hindu faith in action, which may include local mandir (Temples), who run food banks or provide meals to those in their local community. Further examples could include organising clothes banks, cleaning up local areas, sharing food given as darshan (gifts from Brahman), opening their kitchens to feed to homeless, or arranging community actions and events to bring people together. Learners could also look at examples of people in their local Welsh community or nationally who have worked for justice and fairness in society. Consideration could be given to the work of the Hare Krishna Movement in Wales Home Tŷ Krishna Cymru Wellbeing Centre Cardiff and the UK Bhaktivedanta Manor – Hare Krishna Temple Watford – A Spiritual Sanctuary, also Skanda Vale.• Sewa International is an example of Hindu belief in action. Sewa International - Home. Learners need to have an understanding of the aims and work of this organisation. Their mission is to serve humanity and aid local communities and promote volunteering. They are a not-for-profit organisation that want equality for all. <p>Suggested learning activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learners could create a diagram on the main Hindu teachings and link them to examples of Hindu belief in action
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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learners could research local or national charities or individual Hindus that have shown belief in action and the create an information sheet on the charity or individual• Learners could research the aims and work of Sewa International and create a ‘fact file’ on the organisation or a mock website. |
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1.6b Beliefs about life and death – Hinduism

	Content Amplification	Teacher Guidance
1.6.1b Meaning of life in Hinduism	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Hindu beliefs about the meaning of life:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The four aims of human life: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dharma – moral duty • kama – worldly pleasure • artha – wealth and power • moksha – spiritual liberation and release from the cycle of samsara. 	<p>Learners should understand that Hinduism is a way of life for Hindus and that they should commit every aspect of their lives to their Varnashramadharma. The final aim of Hindus is to achieve moksha and to break the cycle of reincarnation.</p> <p>Learners should understand that there are four aims of human life for Hindus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dharma – moral duty. Every Hindu has a moral duty to act in accordance with their varna (cast) and ashrama (stage in life). Hindus believe that they should live their lives in such a way that they are considering their moral choices and always making the best decisions. They should not carry out another person's dharma, it is better to do their own dharma badly than someone else's well. • kama – worldly pleasure. Every Hindu should take pleasure in the natural world, art, food and sexuality. This is used to show respect to others and to respect what Brahman has created. They always remember that Brahman is within every living thing meaning that everything deserves respect. • artha – wealth and power. This focuses on gaining wealth and power through employment. It is important that they have legal employment and can afford to support and sustain their family. This aim is of great importance to men when they are in the Grihastha ashrama (householder stage of life). • moksha – spiritual liberation and release from the cycle of samsara. This is the ultimate aim of every Hindu. To achieve this, they will work at gaining good karma by being morally good and showing devotion to Brahman. Hindus accept that they will face multiple reincarnations before they hope of achieving moksha.

		<p>Suggested learning activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners could study the four aims in detail before creating a flow memory summary map to show how the four aims are interconnected • Learners could create an online magazine article to explain the meaning of life for Hindus.
1.6.2b Hindu beliefs about life, death and reincarnation	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Hindu beliefs about life, death and reincarnation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the atman as distinct from the physical body and mind; Bhagavad Gita 2:22 • reincarnation; Bhagavad Gita 2:12-13 • the concept of samsara; Bhagavad Gita 2:27 • moksha; Bhagavad Gita 2:15; Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 4.4.3–6. 	<p>Learners should understand that Hindu beliefs about life, death and reincarnation is seen as cyclical. They need to remember that one of the four aims for Hindus is to achieve moksha, in order to achieve this Hindus will need to go through the cycle of birth, death and reincarnation a number of times until they have lived a perfect life enabling them to achieve moksha.</p> <p>Learners should understand that the atman is distinct from the physical body and mind. It is the atman that is reborn time and time again. As the Bhagavad Gita 2:22 states a man leaves his physical body and puts on a new one as he would with old garments and puts on new ones.</p> <p>Learners should understand the Hindu beliefs on reincarnation. They should understand that the atman is reincarnated time and time again into different living things such as, people, animals, insects and plants, dependant on the karma good and bad collected in previous lives.</p> <p>Many beliefs in reincarnation relate to other beliefs in Hinduism such as Varnashramadharma as a Hindu needs to complete their duty in accordance with their varna and stage in life to gain good karma. If a Hindu does not follow this or completed another's dharma, then they could have bad karma which would affect their reincarnation. As part of their beliefs in ahimsa (non-violence) a Hindu would avoid purposefully using violence to avoid bad karma. Additionally, Hindus would try to act and think without desire of success or reward in order to gain good karma and a better reincarnation in future lives.</p>

		<p>Learners should understand the concept of samsara and recognise that all living things must die but are born again into another living thing until it can break the cycle and achieve moksha. It is known as the process of life, death and re-birth.</p> <p>Learners should understand how moksha is seen and understood by Hindus. Once the atman is one and is beyond pleasure and pain then the atman joins Brahman and achieves moksha. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 4.4.3–6. states that through desirelessness a Hindu can achieve liberation. The desirelessness that is spoken of here is knowledge of sruti or shruti (heard) texts, meaning knowledge of the self (the atman). By achieving this, Hindus gain spiritual liberation from the cycle of samsara.</p> <p>Suggested learning activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learners can use the teachings listed to identify what each quote is saying about what Hindus believe about life, death and reincarnation.• Learners could create a flow chart diagram of the process that Hindus believe of life, death and re-birth samsara.• Learners could explore the idea of collecting karma and its effect on reincarnation and create images to summarise the difference between collecting good and bad karma.
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<p>1.6.3b Hindu practices</p>	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>The importance of mourning and funeral practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using signs and symbols to express a deeper meaning • showing the link between this life and a future life • remembering that death is not the end of life, but a stage of life between existence and reincarnation • celebrating and remembering the life of the deceased. <p>Hindu mourning practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tarpana • the Shraddha period. <p>Hindu funeral practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antyesti • Pinda Daan. 	<p>Learners should understand what rituals a Hindu will perform when someone dies and appreciate the link between these and Hindu beliefs about life, death and reincarnation. They need to be aware of how these traditions would differ in India to outside of India.</p> <p>When a Hindu dies it is important that the funeral rites, antyesti, are carried out as quickly as possible to release the atman from the body. As all practices are based on the belief in reincarnation, cremation is the norm within Hinduism and will take place within 24 hours of death.</p> <p>Prayers and mantras to the person that has died are recited and rice balls are often placed close to the body to help send the person on their next journey to reincarnation or moksha.</p> <p>The body is carried to the cremation ground which if possible is near flowing water. At the cremation ground the body is circulated by the family as prayers are recited as a sign of respect to the deceased.</p> <p>The eldest son has an important role to play as part of the funeral with the lighting of the funeral pyre and ensuring that the skull splits as part of the cremation. This is the last step in ensuring that the atman is released from the body and can move on to its next life.</p> <p>The ashes are placed in a river, ideally the Ganges, to help with the rebirth process.</p> <p>The Pinda Daan ritual is performed which honours and offers solace to the departed soul. It is believed that it can release the soul from the cycle of rebirth and attain moksha.</p> <p>There are several mourning practices that learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Tarpana which is the offering of water to the deities and ancestors to honour and satisfy them.
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- The Shraddha period which is a period to honour the ancestors. This lasts for 16 days in the month of Ashwin when rituals are performed to sustain and support the spirits of the deceased on their journey to the higher realms and reincarnation.

Suggested learning activities:

- Learners could create a flow chart diagram showing the main rituals that are performed after the death of a Hindu – alongside, identify the reason why they are performed and any links to beliefs about the afterlife.
- Learners could create an information leaflet that details what happens when a Hindu dies to help non-Hindus understand the rituals that take place.

1.7b Religious beliefs in contemporary society – Hinduism

Content Amplification		Teacher Guidance
1.7.1b Hindu identity, belonging and practices	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>The importance of expressing a sense of identity and belonging in Hinduism, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • belonging to a Hindu community • having a shared sense of purpose and direction in life. <p>Hindu identity and belonging expressed through symbolic actions – pilgrimage.</p> <p>Possible reasons for completing pilgrimage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • showing commitment to Brahman as an act of religious devotion • learning more about Hindu figures by visiting sites associated with their lives • following in the footsteps of key figures in Hinduism • experiencing a sense of community. <p>The role, significance and features of the following sites of Hindu pilgrimage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ayodhy • Varanasi (Kashi). <p>Hindu identity and belonging expressed through symbolic actions: the Bhakti Movement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaishnav bhakti – devotion to Vishnu • Shaiva bhakti – devotion to Shiva and Rudra. 	<p>Identity and belonging is an important feature in Hinduism and can be expressed in a variety of ways. Learners need to give examples of different ways that Hindus express their identity and belonging. This will be shown through belonging to the Hindu community and sharing an agreed direction for their lives.</p> <p>Learners need to understand that Hindus may go on pilgrimage to express their identity and feeling of belonging. They need to recognise that different places of pilgrimage will be important to different traditions within Hinduism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Ayodhya</u> is one of the seven sacred cities for Hindus. It is of particular importance to followers of Rama and the Vishnava tradition. It is associated with the Ramayana and known as the birthplace of Rama. • <u>Varanasi</u> is a city in the north of India, and it sits on the River Ganges. It is of particular importance to followers of Shiva and the Shaivite tradition. Additionally, several Hindus wish to die at Varanasi so that their ashes can be scattered into the River Ganges. • During their pilgrimage to Varanasi, many Hindus express their identity through collectively take part in ritual bathing in the River Ganges to wash away sins (papa), offer prayers to the rising sun or perform yoga on the ghats(steps) of the River Ganges. <p>Learners should understand the Bhakti movement and how Hindus respond to the expectations of following bhaktis. This could include the actions and movements performed as bhakti worship is completed. It is important that learners understand the differences between Vaishnav and Shaiva bhakti.</p>

	<p>Learners need to understand what bhakti is. Loving devotion through sacrificial offerings to Brahman. It usually takes the form of food that is given to the gods and returned to the people as Prashad.</p> <p>How bhakti is performed in different places such as, the home, the mandir and on pilgrimage. The completion of puja and arti are daily practices within bhakti as are acts of charity.</p> <p><u>Vaishnava bhakti</u> is focused on the devotion of Vishnu and his avatars, and the Vaishnava tradition. Prayers and offerings will be made to Vishnu and there is much a focus on congregational worship within the Mandir.</p> <p><u>Shaiva bhakti</u> is focused on the devotion of Shiva and Rudra; and the Saivite tradition. Prayers and offerings will be made to Vishnu. Much of the worship is carried out at home or on pilgrimage.</p> <p>Suggested learning activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learners could create a guide to pilgrimage to Ayodhya or Varanasi.• Learners could draw items needed to complete puja and arti ceremonies as part of Bhakti.• Learners could create a flow chart showing the differences and similarities between Vishnava and Shaiva Bhakti.
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<p>1.7.2b Hinduism and morality</p>	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Hindu beliefs and teachings about morality:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dharma – moral duty guiding everyday actions; Bhagavata Purana 1.2.6 • kama – worldly pleasure – physical, mental and emotional pleasure • artha – wealth and power, enough of each to feel secure • Hindus believe in free-will and its link to karma • due to ignorance Hindus fall into maya – a love of money, possessions and even family keep us bound to this world • Hinduism encourages the cultivation of divine qualities (Daivi Sampad) and warns against the dangers of demonic qualities (Asuri Sampad); Bhagavad Gita chapter 16. <p>The connection between karma, rebirth and morality in Hinduism.</p>	<p>Learners need to understand that Hindus will make use of a range of sources of authority to support their understanding and beliefs on morality. They should be able to give specific detail on what these sources of authority say and be able to give examples of the sort of decisions they make using these sources of authority.</p> <p>Dharma is central to all Hindu moral decision making as it guides them in their daily lives. It is by following their Dharma that Hindus attain loving devotion to Brahman. This must be carried out without desire for gain and selflessly giving of themselves. In doing so they satisfy the needs of the self and satisfy Brahman.</p> <p>Two of the aims of life for a Hindu are kama and artha both of which support Hindus in their moral decision making as they must consider pleasure, wealth and power. The focus here is on how they achieve this. Morally this should be through legal ways and not illegal ways. They would also need to consider the effects of their decisions on others and their commitment to Ahimsa.</p> <p>Learners need to understand that Hindus do believe in free-will but have to remember how it links to karma. Freewill does not give Hindus the freedom to do as they want but instead to make free choices in the knowledge of the effect that their choices will have on their karma.</p> <p>Learners need to be aware that Hindus can fall into maya when duty turns into an obsession for possessions or money even family. As such, this can keep the self-tied to the earth in the cycle of rebirth.</p> <p>The aim of Hindus is to develop and promote qualities of the divine and not demonic qualities. To be pure of heart, generous, speak the truth and non-violent are qualities of the divine whereas deceitfulness, insolence, anger and ignorance are seen as demonic qualities.</p>
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Islam

1.5c Beliefs – Islam		
	Content Amplification	Teacher Guidance
1.5.1c Key beliefs and teachings in Islam	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beliefs and teachings about the nature of Allah: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one God – Allah: tawhid; Qur'an 3:18 • the qualities of Allah in the Qur'an • the 99 names of Allah • immanent • transcendent • beneficent • merciful • omnipotent • omniscient • omnibenevolent • omnipresent 	<p>As a starting point, it would be useful for learners to be aware that there are two main branches in Islam – Sunni (who make up around 87%-90% of all worldwide Muslims) and Shi'a (who make up the remaining 10-13% of all Muslims worldwide). The main differences between Sunni and Shi'a Muslims should be identified as being connected to leadership issues after the death of Muhammad, recognition of different versions of Hadith as a source of authority and some key practices where they may perform certain actions differently (e.g. Shi'a Muslims add the name of Ali to the Shahadah). To assess the prior learning of learners, it would be useful to get them to share any knowledge and understanding they have initially as well as explore the context of Islam globally, nationally and locally in Wales, perhaps considering statistical evidence. It would also be useful to consider at the start, throughout and at the end of the study of Unit 1 what Muslims may face in terms of challenges in different parts of the world. It may also be appropriate to address any misconceptions that exist around the religion of Islam due to how it may be presented to many through, for example, the media.</p> <p>Learners will need to know that Islam is a monotheistic religion which is summarised by their acceptance of the belief of Tawhid. All Muslims accept belief in one God who they call Allah; a central belief contained in the Shahadah – the Declaration of Faith – and shown in how Muslims submit to Allah in all aspects of their lives. There are many beliefs and teachings about the nature of Allah in the Qur'an including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allah is the creator of the universe • Allah is immanent – close and works within the world • Allah is transcendent – beyond human understanding/experience

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allah is beneficent – generous and good • Allah is merciful – forgiving • Allah is omnipotent – all-powerful • Allah is omniscient – all seeing/knowing • Allah is omnibenevolent – all loving • Allah is omnipresent – present everywhere <p>Learners should be able to describe the nature of Allah and give examples of the characteristics of his nature. The opening surah of the Qur'an (Surah Al-Fatiha) contains many ideas about the nature of Allah including that he is the only one worthy of worship.</p> <p>Allah is seen as transcendent and the Qur'an teaches he has 99 names, each of which relates to one of his characteristics; these help Muslims to feel that they understand what he is like. Some examples of these names include Al-Hakam (The Judge) and Al-Rahim (The Most Merciful). Muslims will often use subhah beads in prayer to remember the 99 names of Allah.</p> <p>Muslims believe that Allah cannot be captured in an image drawn by the human hand; a belief reinforced in the Qur'an through surah 42:11 when it says "<i>[He is] Creator of the heavens and the earth...There is nothing like unto Him...</i>" For this reason, Muslims will not draw Allah and believe to try and do so is disrespectful. Muslims instead use tessellating patterns and Islamic calligraphy rather than images to capture beliefs about Allah. Islam teaches Muslims it is a wrong to believe in more than one God or see anything/anyone as equal to Allah; a sin known as shirk. Islam teaches shirk is the worst sin that can be committed and will not be forgiven by Allah.</p> <p>Learners will need to know about the role and importance of prophethood in Islam and how it is the method used by Allah to communicate with humanity; a belief known as risalah. The Qur'an names 25 prophets although many Muslims believe there have been</p>
	<p>Reasons for the prohibition of images of Allah; Qur'an 42:11 and the significance of shirk.</p> <p>Prophethood in Islam:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the role and importance of prophethood within Islam – Adam, Ibrahim and Isa • Muhammad as the Seal of the Prophets – the revelation of the Qur'an by Allah, through Angel Jibril Qur'an 2:97-98. 	

		<p>over 124,000 in total. The prophets are believed to have been specifically chosen to reveal messages with some revealing these through holy books. Angels (Malaikah) are also an important part of the process of passing messages on between Allah and prophets.</p> <p>All prophets are seen to be important and are believed to have shared the same message from God; acceptance of belief in one God and that Islam is the true religion. Learners will need to know specific beliefs about the roles of named prophets including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Adam</u> – the first human and prophet who built the kab'ah and given the specific role of khalifah.• <u>Ibrahim</u> – the father of the Arab people who first refused to worship idols, rebuilt the Kab'ah after it was destroyed and had his faith tested through his willingness to sacrifice his son for God.• <u>Isa</u> – referred to as the '<i>son of Mary</i>' who was an important figure; Muslims do not, however, hold the same beliefs as Christians that he was crucified or resurrected or that he was the Son of God. <p>Learners will also need to know the importance of Muhammad as the final prophet in Islam; he is given the title '<i>Seal of the prophets</i>' to recognise being Allah's final messenger and the one chosen to reveal the Qur'an which is accepted as Allah's final message. According to Islam, no further prophets will come after Muhammad.</p> <p>Learners will need to be aware of what Muslims believe about the soul. Islam teaches that the first human was Adam and Allah breathed life into him. The soul is mentioned twenty-one times in the Qur'an and is understood to be a single entity that came from God when he breathed life into humans. Islam teaches that when a child is born, its soul is imprinted with a belief in God, known as fitrah and this describes human nature. The soul is what Muslims believe is internal to a person and the part that goes to the afterlife after death.</p>
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<p>Key beliefs and teachings of Islam:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • submission to Allah – being Muslim, and the Shahadah as an expression of faith • the importance of the Five Pillars of Faith • the importance of greater jihad. 	<p>Learners will need to know specific key practices in Islam which includes how Muslims perform the Five Pillars of Faith and why they are important. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shahadah – Declaration of faith which is the words “<i>There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is the messenger.</i>” The words are spoken multiple times a day, when a baby is born and the words spoken by Muslims before death. • Salah – compulsory prayer completed five times a day. • Zakat – charity given annually to encourage compassion for others. • Sawm – fasting completing annually during the month of Ramadan to teach self-discipline. • Hajj – pilgrimage to Mecca which is completed once in the lifetime of a Muslim if physically able to do so. <p>The Five Pillars of Faith in Islam are duties that every Muslim is expected to perform if able and show how Muslims submit to Allah in every aspect of their lives. Greater jihad is the personal internal struggle to be a good Muslim and practicing the Five Pillars is one way that Muslims can achieve this. Other actions may include working for social justice, avoiding negative actions such as drinking alcohol and forgiving others in their daily lives. It would be useful for learners to consider how the Five Pillars of Faith are practised differently by Muslims in different parts of the world and how some may offer more challenge than others. They should also understand the importance of the Pillars in uniting all Muslims under the ummah.</p> <p>Suggested learning activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners could explore quotes from the Qur'an that detail the nature of Allah and create a summary page showing beliefs Muslims hold about what Allah is like • Learners could create a resource to identify a glossary of key terms that are useful for the content in this part of the specification – this could be done as a quiz, matching activity or simply key word cards
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learners could draw a summary of prophethood to show how messages are passed from Allah to humanity, using examples of specific prophets from their learning to illustrate the connection between Allah and humanity• Learners could create a summary of the five pillars and make up a poem/song/rap to remember what each one is and information about why they are important• Learners could create a summary infographic of the main beliefs and teachings in Islam held by Muslims using lines to show the links between them. <p>The use and importance of sacred texts in daily life:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Qur'an and the Hadith. <p>Sacred texts are important in Islam in helping Muslims understand how Allah wants them to live their lives. The most important sacred text is the Qur'an which was revealed to Muhammad when he was in a cave on Mount Hira by Angel Jibril; an event remembered today by Muslims as the Night of Power. Muslims accept that Muhammad was chosen by Allah to receive the Qur'an because of his nature as being an honest and trustworthy person and that its full revelation took 23 years. The word 'Qur'an' literally means 'revelation' and was spoken by Muhammad as he could not read or write before being written down by his friends and followers after Muhammad's death.</p> <p>Muslims also look to other sources of authority including the Hadith. It contains the sayings of the people closest to Muhammad and is accepted as the words and actions of Muhammad which were recorded by his followers. It is not believed to be the words of Allah but helps and guide Muslims on what Muhammad did and how they should live their lives. Sunni and Shi'a Muslims accept different versions of Hadith, recognising different levels of accuracy in them.</p> <p>Muslims will read the Qur'an and look to the Hadith in their daily lives. This may involve reading parts of the Qur'an daily in Arabic, looking at particular verses when they need guidance or using these sources of authority to make decisions in their lives. They may also</p>
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		<p>talk about teachings with other Muslims or with the Imam in the mosque. Learners should be able to describe how and when Muslims may refer to sources of authority and make direct links to other topics in Unit 1 to reinforce how they are used in daily life.</p>
1.5.2c Islam belief in action	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Islamic beliefs and teachings about belief in action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the importance of the Ummah, Islam encourages a sense of unity; Qur'an 3:110; Qur'an 23:52 • the Quran and Hadiths (sayings of the Prophet Muhammad) repeatedly encourage Muslims to help others; Quran 2:195 • mercy is a quality of Allah and those who show mercy in this life will be shown mercy by Allah in the next life; Sunan al-Tirmidhī 1924 • Muslims have a duty to put faith into action; Qur'an 5:2; Qur'an 9:60. 	<p>Learners will need to be aware that Muslims believe they are all part of the Ummah (worldwide Muslim community) and that this is a bond between Muslims all over the world which shows unity. Islam encourages Muslims to care for others and many teachings in the Qur'an remind Muslims that they are all part of Allah's creation and deserve to be treated with dignity. Within the Ummah, Muslims are equal, and it promotes the welfare of all Muslims; this is a belief that underpins many practices in Islam as well as offering explanation of why Muslims feel it is important to put their beliefs into action.</p> <p>Whilst Sunni and Shi'a Muslims will accept different versions of the Hadith, there are many teachings within both that teach and reinforce the importance of helping others. Muslims want to follow the example of Muhammad in their daily lives so the collections of what Muhammad did and said will allow them to understand how he behaved towards others. Learners should be able to give examples of these teachings to show they understand how Muslims will use them; they may use examples such as Muhammad sharing food with others, Muhammad teaching others the importance of charity or specific stories such as Muhammad helping a woman when she was ill, despite her treating him badly in the past.</p> <p>All Muslims believe that mercy and forgiveness are important and many teachings from the Qur'an and Hadith support this. One of the 99 names of Allah is Al-Ghafoor which means 'the one who has the power to forgive' and Islam teaches that just as Allah forgives humans when they sin, humans should always try to forgive others around them.</p>

	<p>Contemporary local or national examples of Islamic faith and belief in action – community work and faith-based activism.</p>	<p>In performing the Five Pillars of Faith, Muslims show ideas of unity and through this, also equality; this can be seen through Muslims performing the same actions in prayer (Salah) – facing the same directions, performing the same actions, repeating the same preparations – and whilst completing pilgrimage (Hajj) – wearing ihram, performing the same actions, sacrificing an animal, etc. – or the way in which Muslims perform Zakat to help the needy or Sawm to empathise with those who struggle.</p> <p>Islam teaches that Muslims have a duty to care for others and should put their faith in action through performing acts of kindness towards others. Muslims are encouraged to perform sadaqah which is where they give extra money or more importantly time to help others; this could include volunteering or supporting those in their local community. Learners should be able to research examples of Ummah in action in their local community and contrast this to examples of Muslim organisations such as Islamic Relief who work to put these principles in action through projects they run across the world.</p> <p>Learners may like to explore local Welsh and national examples of Islamic faith in action which may include local mosques running food banks or providing meals to those in their local community. Further examples could include organising clothes banks, cleaning up local areas in terms of the environment, sharing food from their Eid celebrations or arranging community actions and events to bring people together such as ‘Open Mosque’ days. Learners could also look at examples of people in their local Welsh community or nationally who have worked for justice and fairness in society. These examples can often be found through research of local Mosque websites – for examples, as seen here: https://www.almanar.org.uk/</p> <p>There are many charity organisations in Islam who work to help those on a local, national and global level. Learners can be aware of examples of these to illustrate how Muslims work to put their faith in action.</p>
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	<p>How the aims and work of Islamic Relief UK reflect Islamic beliefs in action.</p>	<p>Islamic Relief UK (https://www.islamic-relief.org.uk/) is an example of a charity who puts Islamic beliefs in action. They work locally, nationally and globally in over 40 countries to transform the lives of people. They provide emergency responses to disasters whilst also working with improving conditions in local areas and promoting social development. They aim to “empower people across the UK to act together to save and transform lives.”</p> <p>Suggested learning activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learners could create a diagram showing key teachings of Islam and linking them to examples of how Muslims show these teachings through faith in action• Learners could research any local, national or global examples of Muslims who have worked to put their faith in action, creating a fact file of who they are, what they did and why they did it reflecting Islamic teachings• Learners could research the aims and work of Islamic Relief UK to create a fact file showing how they put faith into action, producing a leaflet to inform people of their work.
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1.6a Beliefs about life and death – Islam

Content Amplification	Teacher Guidance
<p>1.6.1c Meaning of life in Islam</p> <p>Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Islamic beliefs about the meaning of life: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • submitting to the will of Allah. Qur'an 33:35 • performing acts of worship; Qur'an 40:65 and righteousness; Qur'an 18:30 • preparing for the Day of Judgment (Qur'an 84:25) and serving humanity; Qur'an 3:185. 	<p>Learners will need to understand that Islam to Muslims is a way of life, and they understand they should submit to Allah in every aspect of their life. This is apparent in Qur'an 33:35. Muslims believe this can be achieved through their beliefs and actions and will try to live their life following the teachings of Islam to please Allah. Sources of authority such as the Qur'an, the Hadith and the example set by Muhammad and other prophets are ways that Muslims learn how they should behave and act. Learners should understand how the meaning of life being shown as submitting to the will of Allah is seen through their practices – for example, in examples such as performing the five pillars of faith, caring for others and creating a sense of unity and through charitable actions where faith is put into action. Performing acts of righteousness for Allah is shown in Qur'an 18:30. Acts of worship such as attending the mosque for the Jummah service, worshipping only Allah and being righteous through how they behave towards others reflects the Islamic way of life. This is reflected in Qur'an 40:65.</p> <p>There are many acts that Muslims can perform to please Allah which may include performing the Five Pillars of Faith, acts of social justice, having a family, following halal diet rules and standing up against injustice, amongst many others. Muslims believe that in living their lives this way they are both following the teachings of Islam and the example that was set by Muhammad.</p> <p>Islam teaches Muslims that this life is a test for the afterlife and that their beliefs and actions will contribute to whether they receive reward or punishment on the Day of Judgement (Qur'an 84:25 and 3:185). Muslims also, however, believe that Allah will not test them more than they can manage which is compatible with the nature of Allah being fair and merciful. Learners should be able to relate their understanding of beliefs about Islam and specifically Allah with the</p>

		<p>behaviour and way Muslims will act in their lives; they may look to specific examples to show this such as performing greater jihad, acts of social justice and performing the Five Pillars of Faith in Islam. Muslims believe they were given freewill from Allah when they were created, and it is this belief that means they will be accountable for their actions on the Day of Judgement; Muslims should live their lives always thinking about this important belief.</p> <p>Suggested learning activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners can use the teachings listed to identify what each quote is saying about what Muslims believe is the meaning of life Learners could create a flow memory summary map showing the key beliefs held by Muslims with relevant and appropriate examples that show the way Muslims will act because of having those beliefs Learners could create a magazine article detailing what Muslims believe is the purpose of life and contrast this with what other belief systems think is the purpose of life.
1.6.2c Islam beliefs about life and death	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Islamic beliefs about the afterlife (Akhirah): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the soul awaits judgement after death in Barzakh; Qur'an 23:100 the Day of Judgement; Qur'an 3:30 Hellfire (Jahannam); Qur'an 2:24 Paradise (Jannah); Qur'an 31:8 predestination (Al-Qadr); Qur'an 87:2 resurrection; Qur'an 46:33. 	<p>Learners should know that Muslims believe death is not the end; beliefs about the <u>afterlife</u> (Akhirah) are important with a direct link between these and the way a Muslim will choose to behave in their lives. The Qur'an contains many teachings about the afterlife, including beliefs about the soul, resurrection and it provides descriptive summaries of what the afterlife is like (Qur'an 46:33).</p> <p>Many of the key beliefs about teachings about the afterlife relate to other beliefs in Islam and learners should be able to not only explain what happens after death but also understand why these beliefs are important. Muslims believe that after death, the soul is taken by Azra'il, the Angel of Death where it enters a stage of <u>Barzakh</u> – a state of waiting until the Day of Judgement. God send two angels – Munkar and Nakir – to question the waiting soul and test their faith asking three questions; Who is your Lord? What is your religion? Who is your prophet? The angel Israfil will blow a trumpet to</p>

announce the Day of Judgement, and this is when all will be raised from their graves and brought before Allah to be judged on how they lived their earthly lives – a belief known as bodily resurrection. A book that represents everything an individual has done will be presented to each person – if their good deeds outweigh their bad, it will be given to them in their right hand and pass to Jannah (Paradise). If their bad deeds outweigh their good deeds, the book will be given to them in their left hand, and they pass to Jahannam (Hellfire).

Learners should understand the descriptions of Paradise (Jannah) and Hellfire (Jahannam) given in the Qur'an.

Jannah is described as paradise; a garden of bliss with rivers flowing of wine, milk or honey that does not intoxicate. There are believed to be seven levels (although some Muslims believe there may be up to one hundred) with the most devoted going to the highest level and they are monitored by nineteen angels. In contrast, Jahannam is described as a place of fire and pain. It is also believed that there are seven levels showing there are different levels of punishment; each will be pitch black with scorching winds where screams from those in each can be heard.

A key Muslim belief is acceptance of Al-Qadr (predestination) which is understood as the concept of Allah knowing everything already. Although Muslims believe that humans were made by Allah and given freewill, they also believe that Allah knows what decisions they will make; a belief that aligns with understanding of Allah being all-knowing.

Suggested learning activities:

- Learners could create a flow chart diagram of the process that Muslims believe happens after death showing their key beliefs on the afterlife

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners could explore descriptions of Jannah and Jahannam from the Qur'an and create an image that summarises what their main beliefs are Learners could create a blog or social media 'asking' app where Muslims can ask questions about how they should behave and learners give responses according to Islamic principles.
1.6.3c Islam practices	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>The importance of mourning and funeral practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> committing a person's body to Allah giving thanks to Allah for that person's life celebrating and remembering the life of the deceased using signs and symbols to express a deeper meaning showing the link between this life and Islamic beliefs about the afterlife. <p>Islamic mourning practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> increased devotion receiving visitors and condolences avoiding decorative clothing and jewellery wearing white maximum period of mourning. <p>Islamic funeral practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ghusl Mayyit Kafan Salat al-Janazah funeral attire burial facing Makkah within 24 hours relative performing dua at the graveside giving to charity (sadaqah) on behalf of the deceased. 	<p>Learners need to understand what rituals Muslims will perform when a person dies and appreciate the link between these and key Islamic beliefs about life after death. In Islam, a funeral is more than simply saying goodbye to a loved one; it is a spiritual journey. They need to be aware that some rituals may vary from one Islamic tradition to another (e.g. Sunni and Shi'a Muslims may have slightly different practices) and also be applied differently in a Muslim country to a non-Muslim country. For example, some actions are more easily performed in a Muslim-majority country where beliefs in Islam are more fully understood – e.g. burial in 24 hours. Learners should be able to explain what practices may be performed and show they also understand why they are done.</p> <p>The main beliefs and practices learners will need to be aware of include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> just before a Muslim dies, Muslims believe it is important to recite the words of the Shahadah (if this is not possible before death, a Muslim will recite them on their behalf immediately after death) – this is done to show commitment to Allah and recite the words that show they are a Muslim. When Muslims hear about the death of a Muslim, they will usually repeat the words "<i>To Allah we belong, and to Him we return.</i>" Qur'an 2:156 – this is done as a mark of respect and reinforces the belief that death is not the end. a family member, usually of the same sex as the deceased performs Ghusl Mayyit and washes the deceased body – this is done to show respect to the deceased but also for a family member to spend time with them whilst giving the final action of

- care through respect for the body.
- The deceased will be dressed in Kafan which is a simple plain cloth or if they have completed Hajj, they may be dressed in the white ihram clothes – this shows modesty and unity/equality within death.
- The funeral of a Muslim who has died usually takes place within 24 hours of death and the body will be buried facing towards Mecca – this is done to reflect the temporary nature of life on earth and for practical reasons in hot countries as the body will start to decay. Facing Mecca is done because it is the holy city for Islam.
- Burial rather than cremation is preferred – this is because Muslims believe in the idea of bodily resurrection after death.
- It is usually men who will attend the funeral, and they wear dark colours – women may be considered too emotional although it is not unusual for men and women to attend if they wish.
- Salat al-Janazah is performed by the family, friends and Muslim community of the deceased – this is the special funeral prayer that is performed to seek forgiveness for the person who has died and give thanks to Allah for their life.
- Mourners are expected to dress appropriately during this time, often wearing black to symbolise mourning and refrain from wearing decorative clothing or jewellery. They are expected to spend an appropriate amount of time receiving visitors and those who wish to show their respect and share their condolences – these actions are done to show it is a time of sadness and the need for respect to the deceased.
- At the graveside of the deceased, a family member, usually an elder, will be selected to perform dua – this extra prayer reminds Muslims of the connection to Allah and the wish for the deceased to continue in the afterlife to Jannah.
- The mourning period in Islam typically lasts three days but widows of the deceased have an extended period of mourning known as ‘iddah’ which lasts four months and ten days – this is

- because Islam teaches that death is not the end.
 - Many Muslims may choose to give acts of sadaqah after someone has died – this could include money, or an act of charity completed in the name of the deceased to remember their life.
- Suggested learning activities:
- Learners could create a flow chart diagram showing the main rituals that are performed after a Muslim dies – alongside they could identify the reason why they are performed and any links to beliefs about the afterlife
 - Learners could create a podcast or information leaflet that details what happens when a Muslim dies to help non-Muslims understand the rituals that take place.

1.7a Religious beliefs in contemporary society – Islam

Content Amplification	Teacher Guidance
<p>1.7.1c Islam identity, belonging and practices</p> <p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>The importance of expressing a sense of identity and belonging for Muslims, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • belonging to a worshipping community • a shared sense of purpose and direction in life. <p>Islamic identity and belonging expressed through symbolic actions – pilgrimage.</p> <p>Possible reasons for completing pilgrimage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • showing commitment to Allah as an act of religious devotion • learning more about Islamic figures by visiting sites associated with their lives • following in the footsteps of key figures in Islam • experiencing a sense of community. 	<p>Identity is a key feature of Islam and can take many forms. Learners need to be able to give examples of how Muslims show their religion to others through their actions and behaviour; this could include examples such as through dress customs, following diet rules, attending Jummah (Friday prayers) at the mosque and following the five pillars of Islamic faith, alongside other actions performed by Muslims. Muslim identity and unity are reflected through the ummah – the Muslim worldwide community – and acceptance that all Muslims are part of this is seen to strengthen their sense of identity.</p> <p>Completion of the fifth Pillar of Faith – Hajj – shows identity and belonging for Muslims. All Muslims are expected to take part at least once in their lifetime if they are physically fit enough and economically stable enough to achieve it.</p> <p>There are many reasons why Muslims may choose to complete pilgrimage; the most important being that it is a duty that is expected of all Muslims. It shows submission towards Allah and as it is a difficult journey with many challenges to overcome for successful completion, it is accepted to be an act of religious devotion for Muslims who complete it. Through attending Hajj and completing the practices/rituals required, Muslims will learn more about places of significance within Islam; for example, Mecca is where Prophet Muhammad lived and grew up and is a key focal point of many acts of submission for Muslims today whilst Medinah is where the religion of Islam was first established by Muhammad. Some places also hold importance to other key figures in Islam; for example, the Kabah in Mecca was first built by Prophet Adam and rebuilt by Prophet Ibrahim. Through completing the practices of Hajj, Muslims can ‘see’ the history and development of Islam and build a sense of unity and community with other Muslims who also undertake this important pillar of faith.</p>

<p>The role, significance and features of the following sites of Islamic pilgrimage during Hajj:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mount Arafat • the pillars at Mina. <p>Islamic identity and belonging expressed through symbolic actions – observing dress and diet customs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the burkha • the hijab • the niqab • halal food. 	<p>Various actions performed on pilgrimage show identity including Muslims all wearing ihram, performing the same actions such as praying on Mount Arafat, completing Tawaf by circling the Kab'ah or rejecting the devil through throwing stones at the pillars in Mina as well as taking part at the end of Hajj through celebration of Eid-ul-Fitr (a festival which all Muslims all over the world take part in at the same time). Muslims believe that they are following in the footsteps of Muhammad by completing the actions on pilgrimage and showing unity and equality with all Muslims.</p> <p>Dress in Islam can show Muslim identity. Learners should be aware of key Islamic teachings on dress such as the belief that Muslims should always dress modestly and the diversity that exists in Muslims' interpretation of this. Different forms of dress can be chosen by Muslims such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the burkha that covers the whole face and body head to toe • the hijab which is a headscarf that covers the head leaving the face open • the niqab that is a veil that covers the face leaving the eyes visible. <p>There will be different choices for each item and different arguments surrounding the choice with each interpreting Muslim identity in different ways.</p> <p>Learners should be aware of both diversity in dress and the controversial nature that exists around arguments about dress.</p> <p>Muslims follow a halal diet, and learners should understand what this is and the specific rules this means they must follow. 'Halal' means 'allowed' and when applied to food, it is the food they are allowed to eat or meat that has been killed and prepared in a certain way according to Islamic law. Muslims will not eat any product from a pig, eat animals not slaughtered properly nor drink alcohol. Meat has to</p>
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		<p>be killed according to strict halal rules including the animal being blessed before being killed, not killed in front of other animals, killed by the jugular vein being cut and the meat being hung upside down so the blood drains out. These methods and halal food rules show Muslim identity.</p> <p>Suggested learning activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners could build a model showing the main actions performed by Muslims on Hajj, take a photo and label the actions and reasons behind them linking them to how they show Muslim identity Learners could draw items of dress that Muslims may choose to wear, labelling them to show reasons for choice of dress Learners can create a halal menu showing understanding of Islamic diet laws.
1.7.2c Islam and morality	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Islamic beliefs and teachings about how to make moral decisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> obeying divine commands; Qur'an 7:28; Qur'an 54:49-55 following Prophet Muhammad's ethical teachings; Qur'an 4:59 sharia law as the ideal set of rules; Qur'an 45:18- using the Quran; Qur'an 38:29 or Hadith as sources of morality the use of conscience; Qur'an 75:1-2. 	<p>Learners need to understand that Muslims will use a variety of sources of authority when faced with a moral decision. They should be able to give specific details about what these sources are as well as examples of the sort of decisions they may make using the sources of authority.</p> <p>Muslim beliefs about Allah being the creator of humanity means humans believe they have been given freewill but will look to teachings from Allah to guide them in what they should and shouldn't do.</p> <p>Muslims believe there are divine rules that they should follow such as not causing harm to others unless it is a justified reason or working to look after Allah's creation.</p> <p>Muslims also accept that society changes and so some modern-day issues may not be contained in the Qur'an; they would therefore look to the example of Muhammad through following his example or exploring what the Hadith guides them to do. Shariah Law is Islamic</p>

	<p>Morality and Divine judgement in the afterlife:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The judging of souls on the Day of Judgement; Qur'an 6:160-164; Qur'an 16:90; Qur'an 16:97; Qur'an 21:47.	<p>law and is based on the Qur'an. It details guidance that can apply to all aspects of the life of a Muslim including family and financial matters as well as issues of personal hygiene or clothing.</p> <p>Finally, Muslims believe that when Allah created humans, he gave them a conscience which is an in-built system of knowing whether a decision is right or wrong and Muslims believe they should trust and use this to help them make moral choices.</p> <p>A key Islamic belief is acceptance of life on earth being a test for the afterlife and Muslims believe Allah will judge them on the decisions they made on earth on the Day of Judgement. Islam teaches that Muslims were given freewill but this comes with responsibility and accountability that they need to try and live according to Allah's will so they will receive reward in the afterlife rather than punishment.</p> <p>Suggested learning activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learners can create a summary page of all the sources of morality that Muslims may use to help them make moral choices – they could try to rank them in order of importance to a Muslim facing a moral decision• Learners could create moral dilemmas or choices a Muslim may be faced with in their daily life and show how they might use sources of authority to decide what action they may take – this could be written as an Agony Aunt style letter with a response given that follows Islamic principles.
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Judaism

1.5d Beliefs – Judaism		
	Content Amplification	Teacher Guidance
1.5.1d Key beliefs and teachings in Judaism	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Jewish beliefs and teachings about the nature of God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creator ex nihilo; Genesis 1:1-12 • God as one • transcendent; Isaiah 55:8-9 • merciful • eternal • judge • law-giver • omnipotence • omniscience • omnibenevolence • omnipresent. <p>Jewish beliefs and teachings about the Messiah (Mashiach) and the Messianic Age (often associated with Olam Ha-Ba):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • being a descendent of King David; Jeremiah 23:5 • Anointed One and Judge; Isaiah 2:1-4 • the Messianic Age; Isaiah 11:9 • differing Orthodox and Reform views on the Messiah the Messianic Age (Olam Ha-Ba). 	<p>Learners will need to know that Judaism is a monotheistic religion, meaning Jews believe in only one God. There are many characteristics about God, including God as creator, transcendent (above and beyond worldly things), merciful (compassionate), eternal (no beginning or end, has always existed and will always exist), judge (judges everyone), law-giver (God gave rules for Jews to obey), omnipotence (all-powerful), omniscience (all-knowing), omnibenevolence (all-loving) and omnipresent (present, everywhere, at all times).</p> <p>Jews believe that one day God will send the Messiah (which means 'Anointed One'), known as the Mashiach. The Messiah is known as Mashiach in Hebrew. Mashiach refers to the ancient practice of anointing kings with oil when they took the throne. The arrival of the Messiah is known as the Messianic Age, or 'Olam Ha-Ba' ('the world to come') and will be a time where the Messiah will judge and create a fair government in Israel. However, there are different views about the Messiah and the Messianic Age. Orthodox Jews believe the Messiah is a person who will be a descendant of King David and will rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem. They believe that the Messianic Age will triumph over the enemies of Israel and lead to people living in peace. It will also mark the end of the world and the resurrection of the dead.</p> <p>Reform Jews believe they should pray for a Messianic Age which will bring about peace. They believe that the Messiah will not necessarily be a person, and the Messianic Age will bring peace and an understanding of God, rather than the rebuilding of the Temple.</p>

<p>Jewish beliefs and teachings about the soul:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the soul (nefesh) created in the image of God; Genesis 1:27 • a divine spark originating from God; Genesis 2:7 • eternal and transcendent, humans possess rationality and free will. <p>Key beliefs and teachings in Judaism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Shema prayer; Deuteronomy 6:4-5 • covenants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Abrahamic Covenant; identity, monotheism, circumcision and Promised Land, Genesis 12:1-3, 17:6-8, 17:11-14 • the Mosaic Covenant; law, commandments, identity, Promised Land, Exodus 3:11- 15 • the importance of the Covenants for Jews today. 	<p>Jews believe humans are created in the image of God and have a soul (nefesh). Genesis describes how God breathed into man's nostrils, the breath of life. This divine spark of the human soul makes humans different from all other creations. The soul allows a person to possess rationality and free will, so a person is able to make choices for themselves. Jews also believe the soul is transcendent and eternal, meaning it will live on after the body has died.</p> <p>The Shema (https://www.jewfaq.org/prayers_shema) is a prayer that declares the Jewish belief in one God. The Shema is found in the Torah and reminds Jews that they should worship God with their heart, soul and strength. Many Jews will recite the Shema twice a day – 'When you lie down and when you get up' [Deuteronomy 6:7]. The Shema can be found in the mezuzah and inside tefillin. The first line is repeated daily [Deuteronomy 6:4-5].</p> <p>A covenant is a promise or agreement between two parties. Covenants were made between God and Noah, Abraham and Moses and reinforces the idea of Jews being God's chosen people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abrahamic Covenant – Abraham was the first person to believe in one God (monotheism). The covenant included the Promised Land (land promised to Abraham's descendants), a promise of descendants (God changed Abram's name to Abraham which means 'father of many nations'), and the promise of blessing and redemption (God blessed Abraham and required him to circumcise himself and all Jewish males after him). • Mosaic Covenant – Moses was the only person to witness God, face to face. As part of the covenant, God asked Moses to free the Israelites from Egyptian slavery, leading them through the wilderness towards the Promised Land. Whilst Moses was in the wilderness, God revealed to him the 613 commandments, including the Ten Commandments, that Jews are expected to follow.
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	<p>The use and importance of sacred texts in daily life:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the differing perspectives of Orthodox and Reform Judaism on the Torah, the Tenakh and the Talmud. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Covenant today – the covenant remains essential for Jews and continues to show their relationship with God. For example, many Jewish boys will still take part in the Brit Milah ceremony at eight days old. This circumcision ceremony reminds Jews of the covenant God made with Abraham and is the first sign of Jewish male identity. The commandments God gave Moses are also still followed by Jews; such as ‘Keep the Sabbath day holy’. Jews also celebrate Passover (Pesach) each year in Wales, the U.K., Israel and the rest of the world. During Passover, Jews remember how God helped the Israelites escape slavery in Egypt. <p>Sacred texts provide Jews with information about every aspect of their life, such as creation, food laws, festival observances, the covenant. The Tenakh is the Hebrew Bible and is made up of three parts – Torah, Nevi’im and Ketuvim. The Torah contains the 613 commandments that Jews must follow. It is read over a year in Orthodox synagogues and over three years in Reform synagogues. Orthodox Jews believe the Torah is the revelation from God given to Moses on Mount Sinai in its final form. They believe it is relevant to life today, so try to keep the commandments in the Torah in every detail and not change them. Reform Jews believe the Torah is based on the revelation from God. However, they think it was written by humans over a period of time, based on their experiences with God and other humans. It can be adapted to changing circumstances.</p> <p>The Nevi’im, meaning ‘Prophets’ contain eight books of the Prophets and encourage Jews to follow the laws in the Torah. The Ketuvim, meaning ‘writings’, are based on history and poetry.</p> <p>Some Jews find the Tenakh difficult to understand. Jews therefore have the Talmud, the oral law, which helps them understand the laws in the Tenakh. For example, the Talmud is split into 6 sections which contain information about issues such as land, prayer, festivals, relationships – https://www.jewfaq.org/torah#Talmud.</p>
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1.5.2d Jewish belief in action	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Jewish beliefs and teachings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gemilut Hasadim; acts of loving kindness - doing good deeds to reflect God's compassion; Pirkei Avot 1:2 from the Mishnah • Jews are instructed by God to help the poor and needy; Deuteronomy 15:11 • Tikkun Olam; repair of the world includes the idea of social justice. 	<p>Learners will need to know that Gemilut Hasadim means 'acts of loving kindness' and involves doing good deeds to reflect God's compassion.</p> <p>It is a mitzvah (duty) for Jews to help the poor and needy and therefore, Jews can obey God by performing Gemilut Hasadim. This can be achieved by being charitable and generous, such as feeding the hungry or visiting the sick. Jews believe that the highest level of Gemilut Hasadim is to attend a funeral service as the dead are unable to repay the kindness.</p> <p>Tikkun Olam refers to repairing the world. The purpose of this is for Jews to look after the world the best way they can. This could involve living a sustainable life, including recycling, reducing their carbon footprint, picking up litter. Many synagogues hold charity events to help support those in need.</p>

	<p>Contemporary local or national examples of Judaism faith and belief in action - community work and faith-based activism.</p> <p>How the aims and work of Mitzvah Day reflect Jewish beliefs in action.</p>	<p>There are many examples, both locally and nationally of how Jews put their faith and belief in action. For example, Jews put their beliefs into action through observing kashrut and festivals (such as Passover and Shabbat) and by attending a synagogue to worship with other Jews. This allows Jews to feel part of a global community and feel a bond with Jewish people around the world.</p> <p>Helping other people is an important mitzvot (duty) in Judaism. Tzedakah is the Hebrew word for charity and justice. Through Tzedakah, Jews are able to put their faith into action. This can be achieved by giving money to those in need, showing kindness and respect to others, helping the sick, the elderly and through volunteering.</p> <p>The JNF UK is a Jewish charity that aims to relieve poverty, relieve those in need and work towards environmental protection and improvement - https://www.jnf.co.uk/.</p> <p>The charity, Jewish Care provides care for older people https://jewishcare.org/.</p> <p>World Jewish Relief is an example of a charity in the UK that provides humanitarian response to those in need - https://www.worldjewishrelief.org/.</p> <p>Mitzvah Day is the UK's largest day of social action and brings people together to make a difference to their communities. They bring people together to address social action through food bank collections, planting new trees and donations to homeless charities.</p> <p>Suggested learning activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an advert, to encourage Jews to donate towards Gemilut Hasadim. • Research the aims and work of Mitzvah Day. Present information through a series of social media posts.
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1.6d Beliefs about life and death – Judaism

Content Amplification		Teacher Guidance
1.6.1d Meaning of life in Judaism	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Jewish beliefs about the meaning of life:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • living in accordance with the covenant with God • observing the mitzvot of the Torah • pursuing justice, compassion, and lifelong learning • fostering strong family and community ties. 	<p>Learners will need to know that Jews will live in accordance with the covenant. Jews obey the covenant in many ways such as celebrating Pesach (Passover), ensuring Jewish baby boys are circumcised at eight days old, and observing the mitzvot in the Torah, such as food laws and festivals. For example, Jews will only eat kosher food in accordance with the teachings of the Torah, such as not mixing milk and meat, and only eating animals with cloven hooves and chew the cud. Jews will also observe festivals such as Passover, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Passover reminds Jews of how God asked Moses to free the Israelites from Egyptian slavery. Rosh Hashanah, which means ‘head of the year’, celebrates the Jewish New Year and remembers the creation of the world and a fresh start. Yom Kippur is also known as the ‘Day of Atonement’. It is the holiest day of the year where Jews will reflect on their past year and ask for God’s forgiveness.</p> <p>Learners will need to know that Jews believe pursuing justice is the foundation of a fair and moral society. This can be achieved by behaving how God expects Jews to live, such as showing acts of compassion and Tzedakah. Jews will continue to show acts of kindness (Gemilut Hasadim) towards others through being charitable and generous. Jews will study Jewish sacred texts, such as the Torah and Talmud as part of their lifelong learning.</p> <p>Learners will need to know how families are important in Judaism. It is a duty for a married couple to procreate and develop a strong family unit. Couples should teach their children Jewish traditions and teachings. For example, one important role of the woman is to teach her children to run a Jewish home, such as obeying kashrut and observing festivals such as Pesach. One important role of the man is to teach his children about Judaism and ensure they attend synagogue worship.</p>

		<p>Suggested learning activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research how Jews celebrate Pesach. Create a story board outlining the main features of the festival. • Create a blog to outline the duties of a Jewish family.
1.6.2d Jewish beliefs about life and death	<p>Jewish beliefs about the afterlife:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gan Eden (paradise) • Gehenna (hell) • Resurrection; bodily (Orthodox) and spiritual (Reform) • Olam Ha-Ba (the world to come - the afterlife also often linked to the Messianic Age) • Sheol (where souls are cleansed and purified). 	<p>Learners will need to know that Jews focus on this life, rather than the afterlife. A person's actions in life are important and there are differences in opinions about the afterlife. Orthodox and Reform Jews have different views about the resurrection of the body. Orthodox Jews do not allow cremation because they believe that the physical body will be resurrected. Reform Jews believe that only the soul will be resurrected and therefore the body is not needed.</p> <p>In Judaism, heaven is known as <u>Gan Eden</u>. Many Jews consider it to be a place of sunshine where all people will be together in peace. Others believe it is a state of consciousness where souls feel close to God. Many Jews believe in Olam Ha-Ba (meaning 'the world to come'). This is linked to the Messianic Age where God has judged the living and dead. It is possible that some souls will go to <u>Gehenna</u> (hell) after death. This is a place of torment and punishment. Souls may also be sent to <u>Sheol</u> which is described as a place of darkness; a place where souls are cleansed and purified, after a person has died.</p> <p>Suggested learning activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a resource to identify a glossary of key terms that is useful for this content. This could be a quiz, matching key words. • Write a series of digital stories outlining Jewish beliefs about the afterlife

<p>1.6.3d Jewish practices</p>	<p>The importance of mourning and funeral practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • committing a person's body to God • giving thanks to God for that person's life • celebrating and remembering the life of the deceased • using signs and symbols to express a deeper meaning • showing the link between this life and Jewish beliefs about the afterlife. <p>Jewish mourning practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aninut • shiva • shloshim • yarzheit. <p>Jewish funeral practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • taharah • the funeral service. 	<p>Learners will need to know that funerals are important as they commit the person's body to God and provide people with an opportunity to give thanks for that person's life. There are many practices within a funeral that allow mourners to celebrate and remember the life of the deceased. Jewish funerals also give meaning to beliefs about the afterlife.</p> <p>The time between death and the funeral is known as <u>aninut</u>. The mourner at this point is known as an onan (immediate mourner) and it is their responsibility to arrange the burial, usually within 24 hours. Mourning begins by reciting the Kaddish prayer which allows Jews to focus on God.</p> <p>The first week after the funeral is known as <u>shiva</u> (seven). During this week the mourners gather in one of their homes and pray. During shiva, Jews will sit on low chairs, they will not cut their hair or nails, all mirrors are covered, sexual relations are forbidden, and they do not listen to music or wear leather shoes. At the end of the week the mourners return to their daily duties.</p> <p><u>Shloshim</u> takes place for 30 days after the funeral. Mourners are allowed to leave their home and return to work, but they will not cut their hair or shave during this time. Jews mourning a parent will be avelut (the year of mourning for the loss of a parent) where kaddish will be recited daily. During this time, Jews will avoid parties and will recite kaddish every day.</p> <p>The anniversary of death is called <u>yahrzeit</u>. A special yahrzeit candle is burnt for 24 hours and kaddish is said. The children leave a small stone on the grave to show they have attended the grave. A stone will not die and is therefore a more permanent reminder. Some Jews will fast on this day or donate to charities.</p>
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Taharah will then take place. Taharah means purification and is the ritual of washing and preparing the deceased for burial. The chevra kaddisha (holy or burial society) will perform this role, showing respect to the deceased. Performing taharah is considered to be a mitzvah of high praise and great honour. The body is then placed in a simple, unpolished wooden coffin to show that in death people are equal.

Before an Orthodox Jewish funeral takes place, the immediate mourners will make a tear in their garments. This is known as keriah and symbolises their grief. Flowers are not allowed at a Jewish funeral. This is because, although flowers are beautiful, they die and are therefore only a temporary memorial. The Jewish funeral service is very brief. Psalms are read, followed by a short prayer praising God for granting life and taking it away. The rabbi often says a short talk about the dead person. The coffin is then lowered into the ground and mourners begin to fill the grave with earth. They do this to confirm in their own minds that the person is dead. They are also showing oneness with the close relatives who are mourning the death. The mourner is now known as an avel – prolonged mourner. When the mourners return home, they have a meal of hard-boiled eggs which shows the mourner's inability to put their grief into words and to symbolise eternal life.

Suggested learning activities:

- Design a flow map of Jewish funeral practices.
- Write an 'agony aunt' style response to a non-Jew, outlining the mourning practices in Judaism.

1.7d Religious beliefs in contemporary society – Judaism

Content Amplification	Teacher Guidance
<p>1.7.1d Jewish identity, belonging and practices</p> <p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>The importance of expressing a sense of identity and belonging for Jewish people, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • belonging to a worshipping community • shared sense of purpose and direction in life. <p>Jewish identity and belonging expressed through symbolic actions - going to significant places.</p> <p>Possible reasons for going to significant places:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • showing commitment to God as an act of religious devotion • learning more about Jewish figures by visiting sites associated with their lives • following in the footsteps of key figures in Judaism • experiencing a sense of community. <p>The role, significance and features of the following significant places for Jews:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Western Wall • Yad Vashem. <p>Jewish identity and belonging expressed through symbolic actions - observing dress and diet customs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • kippah • tefillin • tallit • kosher food 	<p>Learners will need to know that Jews can feel God's presence, or Shekhinah, in the world. Jews are able to connect with God through worship, prayer and study. For example, Jews come together to worship in the synagogue. In the synagogue the Ner Tamid, or everlasting light, will burn continuously to show God's eternal presence. Jews will also feel God's presence through prayer. The synagogue is used as a house of prayer (beit tefillah), where Jews come together to pray. A group of ten men (over the age of 13) is required for prayer to take place; this is known as a minyan. Jews also believe they can connect with God through study. The synagogue is used as a place of study (beit midrash) and is a place where Jews will learn about their religion, regardless of their age.</p> <p>The synagogue is also a place where Jews can feel a sense of purpose and direction in life. The community can celebrate services and rites of passage in the synagogue, such as Brit Milah, Bar Mitzvah and Bat Mitzvah ceremonies, marriage and funerals. The synagogue is also a place where Jews can relax in clubs such as youth clubs, crèches and mother and baby clubs, clubs for older people and lunch clubs. The synagogue is a place where Jews can discuss important matters and somewhere where they can collect and dispense money and other items for those less fortunate.</p> <p>Some Jews would develop their identity and belonging by attending significant places. These allow Jews to show commitment to God, learn about their history, follow in the footsteps of their ancestors such as Abraham and Moses, strengthen their faith, bring them closer to God and celebrate festivals and rites of passage.</p> <p>Some Orthodox Jews would consider Shekinah as a physical presence which they can feel at the <u>Western Wall</u>.</p>

At the Western Wall Jews can feel close to where the Temple, which was destroyed by the Romans, once stood. Jews have an opportunity to write prayers on paper and place them inside the crevices of the wall as this is where some believe God's presence rests. The aron hakodesh, which holds the Torah scrolls, in the synagogue faces east towards the Western Wall.

In 1953, the Israeli Government (Knesset) established Yad Vashem, Israel's national Holocaust memorial. The name Yad Vashem can be translated as 'a memorial and a name'. Yad Vashem is important as it commemorates, documents, researches and educates about the Holocaust. Within Yad Vashem there are areas of significance for Jews. These include:

- the Historical Museum about the history of the Holocaust, starting in Germany in 1933 to the last stages of the Holocaust
- the Hall of Remembrance with names of 22 concentration camps engraved onto a mosaic floor
- the Hall of Names which records the names of the millions of Jews who were killed in the Holocaust.

Yad Vashem is therefore a significant place for Jews to remember their history and to strengthen their community.

Learners will need to know that Jews can express their identity and belonging through observing dress and diet customs. For example, Jewish men will wear a kippah (skull cap) as a sign of awe and respect to God. Wearing the kippah is a reminder for Jews that God is always above them and they are always in the presence of God.

Tefillin are worn mainly by Orthodox Jewish men during morning prayer. Tefillin consists of two leather boxes which contain words from the Shema. The tefillah shel rosh is bound to the head with four compartments containing the first two paragraphs of the Shema, and the tefillah shel yad is bound to the upper arm and contains a single scroll of the same passages from the Shema.

Tefillin are worn mainly by Orthodox Jewish men and remind Jews how they should worship God with their heart and mind. Jewish men are obeying the commandments from the Shema when they wear tefillin - Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads.' Deuteronomy 6:8. Orthodox Jewish men and some men and women in Liberal and Reform Judaism will also wear a tallit during morning services, each Shabbat and at Yom Kippur. The tallit is a four cornered white prayer shawl that reminds Jews of the 613 commandments (mitzvot) that they should obey. The four corners of the tallit are fringes, known as tzitzit. Wearing a tallit reminds Jews that God is always around them. Some Jewish men wear a tallit katan under their shirts as a constant reminder that God is with them. Jewish men are usually wrapped in their tallit when they are buried. They are wrapped in their tallit with the tzitzit cut off to represent that they are no longer obliged to fulfil the mitzvot.

Learners will need to know how Jews express their identity through diet customs. Food laws in Judaism are known as kashrut and can be split into three sections: kosher meaning fit or correct; treifa meaning forbidden; and parev meaning neutral. The Torah contains information about food Jews can and cannot eat and how it should be prepared. For example, the Torah states that Jews should only eat animals with cloven hooves and chew the cud, and fish with fins and scales. There are also important rules about how food should be prepared. For example, the Torah includes instructions about not mixing milk and meat. Jews may only eat animals and birds that have been killed in a certain way in accordance with Jewish law. The method of killing is known as shechita. Shechita is a cut across the throat with a razor-sharp knife. Causing pain to any living creature is strictly forbidden in Jewish law. A skilled professional slaughterer called a shochet performs the slaughtering. The Torah commands Jews not to eat the blood of animals and birds. Jews use salt and water to remove the blood from meat before cooking it. To certify food is kosher a label called a hechsher is printed onto the packet or carton.

		<p>Keeping kosher is considered to show respect to God and Jewish traditions. It is also a reminder of the covenant between God and the Jews. It also brings the community together by uniting them and provides them with an identity. By observing kashrut Jews are obeying God's commandments and are constantly reminded that they are God's chosen people.</p> <p>Suggested learning activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research the internal features of a synagogue. Create a model of a synagogue. • Research a Bar or Bat Mitzvah. Imagine you had attended the ceremony. Create a podcast, to explain what happened and why it is important. • Create a series of digital stories about either Yad Vashem or the Western Wall. Include where they are and why they are important. • Prepare a menu for a kosher restaurant. Within the menu explain the reasons for the food options.
1.7.2d Judaism and morality	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Jewish beliefs and teachings about how to make moral decisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • obeying divine commands - the Ten Commandments that form part of the covenant; Exodus 20:1-17 • the 613 Mitzvot (Orthodox and Reform perspectives) • use of conscience (matzpun) in conjunction with the Torah • good inclinations (yetzer ha tov) versus evil inclinations (yetzer hara) and the free will to make these judgements • ethical teachings of the Torah, the Tenakh, and the Talmud (Orthodox and Reform perspectives). 	<p>Learners will need to know how Jews make moral decisions based on the 613 mitzvot, including the Ten Commandments [Exodus 20:1-17]. This can include observing food laws, belief in one God and obeying the Covenant. The 613 mitzvot cover ritual mitzvot which focus on worship and festivals, and moral mitzvot which covers how Jews should deal with other people. Following these laws are an important part of Judaism. The 613 mitzvot are made up of 248 positive mitzvot, known as mitzvot aseh and 365 negative mitzvot, known as mitzvot lo taaseh.</p> <p>Jews will use their free will and conscience (matzpun) to decide whether to obey the mitzvot. They believe humans were born to have both good inclinations (yetzer ha tov) and evil inclinations (yetzer hara) and the ability to use their free will to make these decisions. Jews believe that by following the mitzvot they will live a good life, will be closer to God and their deeds will be judged in the afterlife</p>

Morality and Divine judgement in the afterlife:

- God judging your every deed; Ecclesiastes 12:14
- a time of distress but also divine judgment; Daniel 12:1-2.

(Ecclesiastes 12:14). Orthodox Jews will obey the mitzvot, from sacred texts, strictly as they are the direct word of God. However, Reform Jews believe it is their personal choice whether they observe the mitzvot from sacred texts. They believe the mitzvot were influenced by the culture of the time and may not be fully relevant today. Jews believe humans were born to have both good and bad inclinations.

Suggested learning activities:

- Create a resource to identify a glossary of key terms that is useful for this content. This could be a quiz, matching key words.
- Think of a moral dilemma. Write an agony aunt style letter outlining how Jews would use their beliefs to respond to the dilemma.

Sikhism

1.5e Beliefs – Sikhism (Sikhi)		
	Content Amplification	Teacher Guidance
1.5.1e Key beliefs and teachings in Sikhism	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Beliefs and teachings about the nature of God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the many names for God; Guru Granth Sahib 877; • as found in the Mool Mantra - Ik Onkar (one God); Sat Nam (whose name is truth), Nirankar (formless); immortal, without fear; without hate, Nirgun; Guru Granth Sahib 290, Sargun; Guru Granth Sahib 294, self-illuminated; the true Guru • omnipotent • omniscient • omnibenevolent • omnipresent • self-revealing; Guru Granth Sahib 1 • genderless • Waheguru (Wonderful Guru). 	<p>Learners should know the qualities of God as expressed through the various teachings.</p> <p>Sikhs understand the nature of God through the Mool Mantra, the 'basic teaching'. This indicates that belief in the nature of God is one of the most important beliefs held by Sikhs and would encourage the following of the Sikh path.</p> <p>As a result of the teachings, Sikhs consider that qualities of God can be known while also maintaining an air of mystery. For example, some of the qualities are contradictory: Nirgun and Sargun.</p> <p>Understanding the nature of God can have an impact on belief and practice; for example, the understanding the nature and purpose of evil and suffering as well as the duty of Sikhs to follow teachings and undergo the journey to Gurmukh (being God-Centred).</p> <p>Teaching Tip: Learners could analyse the Mool Mantra, sticking it into the centre of their page and annotating with explanations about what each aspect teaches a Sikh, e.g. God is neither male nor female, meaning God is genderless and is loving of all genders and so one gender should not be favoured over another.</p> <p>Teaching Tip: A game/matching exercise where learners interpret scripture and make links between teachings and the beliefs they encourage. Make use of 3. SC Sikhism - Scripture and Beliefs Pairs.pdf.</p>

<p>Sikh beliefs and teaching about Waheguru as Creator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the world created through divine will (hukam); Guru Granth Sahib 1399 • created the universe and all life within it; sustains everything in existence; Guru Granth Sahib 294 • Waheguru exists beyond and separate from the universe (Nirgun and Sargun). <p>Sikh beliefs about the atma (human soul):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the soul as a divine essence; a spark of Waheguru; resides within every living being - animals and humans • humans are the highest form of living creature; pure; transcendent, eternal • the atma comes from the Waheguru and returns to it. 	<p>Sikhs understand that all things in existence have come about through the command and will of Waheguru, and that before creation there was nothing but Waheguru. There is no detailed creation story as in other religions.</p> <p>Due to the nature of God being Sargun, everything in existence has the presence of Waheguru. This may impact attitudes towards environmental ethics, social justice and the treatment of animals.</p> <p>Sikhs believe all living beings to have a ‘divine spark’; part of Waheguru within them – developing upon the idea that all of creation has the presence of Waheguru. Sikhs believe humans to be the highest of God’s creation due to their ability to become Gurmukh and break the cycle of samsara (birth death and rebirth). Breaking the cycle of samsara and achieving mukti (liberation) will result in the atma returning to Waheguru. The understanding of the soul impacts attitudes towards the treatment of animals, social justice, as well as religious and moral duty. The understanding of the soul impacts Sikh beliefs about karma and reincarnation.</p> <p>Teaching Tip: Learners could play a game – matching up the key words and definitions by making links like dominoes 4. SC Sikhism Key Terms Dominoes.pdf, a game of pairs, 5. SC Sikhism Key Terms Pairs.pdf or a game of ‘taboo’ where they describe the key words to their teammates without saying certain words, e.g. describe the term omnibenevolent without using the word ‘loving’.</p> <p><i>‘Those who do not serve the True Guru [God] and who do not contemplate the Word of the Shabad - spiritual wisdom does not enter into their hearts; they are like dead bodies in the world. They go through the cycle of 8.4 million reincarnations, and they are ruined through death and rebirth.’</i></p> <p>— Guru Granth Sahib 88</p>
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<p>Key beliefs and teachings of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guru Nanak • Guru Gobind Singh. <p>The use and importance of sacred texts in daily life:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Guru Granth Sahib. 	<p>Learners should know; Guru Nanak's beliefs and teachings could include an emphasis on equality, selfless service and devotion to One God. Key teachings include "Naam Japo, Kirat Karo, Vand Chhako" (Meditate, Earn Honestly, Share).</p> <p>Guru Gobind Singh's beliefs and teachings could include founding the Khalsa, advocating courage, justice and spiritual discipline through instructing wearing the turban.</p> <p>Suggested Learning Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore Guru Nanak's teachings through stories like 'Sacha Sauda'. • Role-play the Khalsa initiation ceremony. • Discuss equality in modern contexts. <p>The Guru Granth Sahib (GGS), Sikhism's eternal Guru, offers spiritual guidance, moral principles, and teachings about devotion to God and their core beliefs regarding equality. It is central to worship and personal meditation and read daily for inspiration.</p> <p>Spiritual Guidance and devotion to God - the GGS emphasises a personal connection with the Divine through devotion and meditation. This verse highlights the importance of meditating on God's name to attain spiritual enlightenment:</p> <p><i>"Sing the praises of the Lord, the treasure of virtue; through the Guru, the Lord is revealed." (GGS 2)</i></p> <p>Unity with God - the GGS teaches that realising God is the ultimate goal of life. This verse shows the omnipresence of God and the need for surrender to His will:</p> <p><i>"He Himself is the Master, and He Himself is the servant. O Nanak, He Himself is pervading and permeating all." (GGS 25)</i></p>
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Teachings on Devotion to God – the GGS encourages Naam Simran (Meditation on God's Name) and repetition of God's name (Naam Japna) is presented as the highest spiritual practice as exemplified by the quote below:

"Meditate on the Lord's Name, and cross over the terrifying world-ocean." (GGS 67)

Moral Principles and equality of all beings - The Guru Granth Sahib advocates for equality regardless of caste, creed or gender. This verse stresses the Sikh belief in universal equality:

"Recognise the Lord's Light within all, and do not consider social class or status; there are no classes or castes in the hereafter." (GGS 349)

Moral principles and honest living – the GGS teaches the importance of earning an honest livelihood and sharing with others. This verse reinforces the principles of truthfulness and selflessness.

"The person who earns through hard work and then shares with others has found the path to righteousness." (GGS 1245)

The GGS is central to daily worship and meditation as part of the daily recitation (Nitnem) where Sikhs are encouraged to read and recite specific prayers from the Guru Granth Sahib daily, such as Japji Sahib, Rehras Sahib and Kirtan Sohila. For example, they may read the opening lines, the Mool Mantra, which are recited as a foundational prayer:

"Ik Onkar, Sat Naam, Karta Purakh, Nirbhau, Nirvair, Akaal Moorat, Ajooni, Saibhang, Gurprasad." (GGS 1)

These lines encapsulate Sikh beliefs and serve as a daily reminder of God's attributes.

		<p>The GGS is also of great importance as part of worship within the Sangat (Congregational Worship). The Guru Granth Sahib is placed at the centre of every Gurdwara and read aloud during worship, emphasising its role in guiding the community. The practice of Akhand Path, a continuous 48-hour reading of the scripture, demonstrates its importance in collective and personal devotion.</p> <p>Suggested Learning Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit a gurdwara or show a virtual tour to observe the Guru Granth Sahib in use. Discuss excerpts e.g. the Mool Mantra, exploring its relevance today. Create a class reflection on sacred texts' role in promoting values. <p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guru Nanak and the Boulder SikhNet Guru Nanak and the Queen of Black Magic SikhNet Guru Nanak & the Two Villages SikhNet Guru Gobind Singh and the New Musket SikhNet Guru Gobind Singh - SikhiWiki, free Sikh encyclopedia. BBC - Religions - Sikhism: Guru Nanak
1.5.2e Sikh belief in action	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Key Sikh beliefs and teachings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> all humans are equal; Guru Granth Sahib 272:12-13 seva: selfless service taan; physical service maan; mental service dhan; material service. 	<p>Learners should know Sikhism emphasises equality and selfless service as central to living a meaningful life. The Guru Granth Sahib states, "<i>All are equal before God</i>" (272:12-13), rejecting discrimination. Seva (selfless service) is a core practice, categorised into:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taan: Physical service, like preparing food in a langar. Maan: Mental service, including teaching or offering emotional support. Dhan: Material service, such as donating resources to those in need.

	<p>Contemporary local or national examples of Sikh faith and belief in action - community work and faith-based activism.</p> <p>How the aims and work of Khalsa Aid reflect Sikh beliefs in action.</p>	<p>Suggested Learning Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse Guru Granth Sahib 272:12-13 and its application in combating prejudice. • Explore real-life examples of seva, including community service projects. • Role-play scenarios to illustrate taan, maan, and dhan in daily life. • <u>Sikhism_C8a_Equality.pdf</u> <p>Learners should know how Sikhism inspires community service and activism, reflecting beliefs in equality and seva. In Wales and the UK, Sikh gurdwaras often host langar (free community kitchens) open to all and supporting those facing food insecurity. Sikh charities like Khalsa Aid provide disaster relief and aid to refugees, exemplifying global seva. Locally, Welsh Sikhs participate in interfaith events, promoting understanding and cohesion.</p> <p>Suggested Learning Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Welsh gurdwaras' contributions to local communities. • Examine Khalsa Aid's UK projects, linking them to taan, maan, and dhan. • Invite a Sikh guest speaker to discuss activism or seva in practice. • Organise a class project on food banks to connect Sikh principles with local needs. <p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Khalsa Aid: <u>www.khalsaaid.org</u> • Welsh Sikh gurdwara websites – e.g. <u>Sikh Gurdwara Cardiff</u> • Inter Faith Network UK resources for understanding Sikh interfaith efforts - <u>The Inter Faith Network (IFN)</u>
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1.6e Beliefs about life and death – Sikhism (Sikhi)		
	Content Amplification	Teacher Guidance
1.6.1e Meaning of life in Sikhism	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Sikh beliefs about the meaning of life:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gurmukh - living in a Waheguru centred way as laid down in the Guru Granth Sahib • practicing seva and accepting the divine will (hukam) • achieving union with Waheguru through righteous living and devotion • achieving mukti. 	<p>Learners should know Sikhism teaches that the purpose of life is to achieve <u>mukti</u> (liberation from the cycle of birth and death) and union with Waheguru (God).</p> <p>This is achieved by living as a <u>gurmukh</u>—a God-centred person who follows the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib. Key practices include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Seva</u>: Selfless service fosters humility and helps individuals transcend ego. • <u>Hukam</u>: Accepting Waheguru's divine will brings inner peace and alignment with the universe. • <u>Righteous living and devotion</u>: Practicing honesty, compassion, and daily meditation on God's name (Naam Japna) develops spiritual discipline and closeness to Waheguru. <p>Suggested Learning Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the term <u>gurmukh</u> by contrasting it with <u>manmukh</u> (self-centred living). Use real-life scenarios to explore how decisions reflect these mindsets. • Analyse Sikh hymns (Shabads) from the Guru Granth Sahib about hukam and seva. • Engage learners in a reflective activity, asking how serving others could lead to personal fulfilment.
1.6.2e Sikh beliefs about life and death	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Sikh beliefs about life, death and reincarnation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • karma • reincarnation • samsara; Guru Granth Sahib 13:11-12 • mukti. 	<p>Learners should know that Sikhs believe in <u>karma</u>, where actions in this life determine one's future in the cycle of <u>samsara</u> (birth, death, and rebirth). The Guru Granth Sahib (13:11-12) teaches that attachment to worldly desires traps the soul in samsara. Liberation, or <u>mukti</u>, is achieved by overcoming ego, performing good deeds, meditating on Waheguru and aligning with divine will (hukam). Mukti signifies ultimate union with Waheguru, ending the cycle of <u>reincarnation</u> and achieving eternal bliss. While samsara is seen as</p>

an opportunity for spiritual growth, the goal is to transcend it through righteous living and devotion.

Suggested Learning Activities:

- Discuss Karma and Samsara: Use examples to explain how actions (karma) influence future lives and discuss how ethical living contributes to liberation.
- Text Analysis: Study Guru Granth Sahib 13:11-12 to explore Sikh views on material attachment and spiritual freedom. Ask learners to reflect on what 'liberation' means in different contexts.
- Role-play Scenarios: Create life situations illustrating positive and negative karma, encouraging learners to consider consequences and moral choices.
- Compare Beliefs: Compare Sikh teachings about reincarnation and liberation with Hinduism and Buddhism to highlight similarities and distinctions.
- Reflection Activity: Have learners create a timeline, or 'pathway to mukti', identifying qualities and practices (e.g., seva, naam japo) that help achieve liberation.
- [2. SC Sikhism - Action & Karma.pdf](#)

Resources:

- [The afterlife - Key beliefs in Sikhism - GCSE Religious Studies Revision - Edugas - BBC Bitesize](#)
- [Reincarnation - SikhiWiki, free Sikh encyclopedia.](#)

<p>1.6.3e Sikh practices</p>	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>The importance of mourning and funeral practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • giving thanks to the Waheguru for that person's life • celebrating and remembering the life of the person and their soul reuniting with God <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using signs and symbols to express a deeper meaning • showing the link between this life and Sikh beliefs about life, death and reincarnation • remembering that death is not the end of life, but a stage of life between existence and rebirth. <p>Sikh mourning practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no formal mourning custom, but there are expressions of grief • providing a supportive environment for those who are grieving • charitable acts in memory of the deceased, such as organising a langar or making donations to the community, reflecting the Sikh value of seva (selfless service). 	<p>Learners should know that in Sikhism funerals are a time to <u>give thanks to Waheguru</u> for the deceased's life and <u>celebrate their soul's journey</u>.</p> <p>Sikhs believe that the soul reunites with Waheguru, moving beyond the cycle of samsara (birth, death, and rebirth) or progressing towards mukti (liberation).</p> <p>Funerals are rooted in the understanding that life and death are divine processes governed by Waheguru's will (hukam).</p> <p>Practices and Symbols:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sikh funerals involve readings from the Guru Granth Sahib and singing hymns (Shabads) that celebrate God's mercy and the departed soul's spiritual journey. • The body is cremated, symbolising the impermanence of the physical form and the eternal nature of the soul. <p><u>Sikhs see death is a transition, a stage of life rather than an end.</u></p> <p>Funeral attendees wear white to signify purity and peace and no elaborate mourning rituals are performed. Sikh mourning practices are rooted in compassion and support, without rigid formalities around grief. People express their emotions freely and the community comes together to comfort and help those who are grieving. A key part of remembering the deceased is through seva—selfless service. Families often organise a langar (a community meal) or make charitable donations in their loved one's memory. These acts not only honour the departed but also strengthen bonds within the community, reflecting the Sikh values of kindness, generosity and humility. It's a way of finding meaning and connection in a time of loss.</p>
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	<p>Sikh funeral practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antam Sanskaar • Cremation • Antim Ardas • The Bhog ceremony. 	<p>Suggested Learning Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare Practices: Discuss Sikh funeral traditions alongside Christianity, highlighting shared themes of remembrance and spiritual beliefs. • Explore Hymns: Analyse a Shabad about death and liberation to connect Sikh beliefs to the funeral practices. • Symbols Activity: Examine the use of white clothing and cremation as symbols of purity and the soul's release. • Reflective Discussion: Encourage learners to think about how these practices embody Sikh teachings on reincarnation and mukti. • Creative Work: Ask learners to create a 'life map' showing how Sikh beliefs guide every stage of life, including death. <p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funeral Ceremonies (Antam Sanskar) - Gateway To Sikhism • Antam Sanskar - SikhiWiki, free Sikh encyclopedia. • Death and mourning - Rites of passage - GCSE Religious Studies Revision - WJEC - BBC Bitesize <p>Learners should know that Sikh cremation rite – <u>Antan Sanskaar</u>, reflects belief in the soul's eternal nature. Sikh funeral practices, known as Antam Sanskaar (final rites), focus on simplicity, dignity and the acceptance of God's will. Cremation is the preferred practice, symbolising the body's return to nature and the release of the soul as part of the cycle of birth, death and rebirth. Prayers and hymns from the Guru Granth Sahib are recited to bring comfort and peace. The <u>Antim Ardas</u> (final prayer) concludes the funeral, asking for blessings on the departed soul's journey to the Divine in the hope that it has reached mukti and returns to Waheguru. A few days later, the <u>Bhog ceremony</u> is held, with scripture readings and a langar (community meal). This gathering brings people together to support one another, honour the departed, and find strength in faith and community and is part of the mourning process.</p>
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		<p>Suggested Learning Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read through and analyse potential poems, quotes and shabads used throughout Antam Sanskaar making links between beliefs expressed and the practices complete.• Explain how cremation symbolises the body's return to nature and the soul's journey.• Explore excerpts of hymns read during these ceremonies to connect with Sikh beliefs about mukti.• Encourage learners to create reflective art symbolising life's impermanence and the soul's liberation.• Use a search engine to find Sikh funeral poems, prayers and hymns to share in class.
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1.7e Religious beliefs in contemporary society – Sikhism

Content Amplification		Teacher Guidance
1.7.1e Sikh identity, belonging and practices	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>The importance of expressing a sense of identity and belonging for Sikhs, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • belonging to a worshipping community • shared sense of purpose and direction in life. <p>Sikh identity and belonging expressed through symbolic actions – pilgrimage.</p> <p>Possible reasons for pilgrimage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • showing commitment to Waheguru as an act of religious devotion • learning more about Sikh figures by visiting sites associated with their lives • following in the footsteps of key figures in Sikhism • experiencing sense of community. 	<p>Learners should know the benefits of belonging to the Sangat, the community of Sikhs, sometimes known as the sadh sangat (holy congregation). The sangat are involved in many aspects of family, social and religious life, allowing Sikhs to fulfil their seva through taan, maan and dhan.</p> <p>Learners should know the benefits and limitations of pilgrimage. There is no direct requirement for Sikhs to attend pilgrimage, but they may choose to for a variety of reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sikhs may see this as an opportunity to take time out of their busy lives to focus on the spiritual journey and in turn, devotion to Waheguru. • Sikhs may choose to perform naam japna (reciting God's name) while on the journey. • Going on pilgrimage to Amritsar may encourage a Sikh to take part in the world's biggest langar as part of their selfless service to others and gain a greater sense of community while doing so. • As Amritdhari Sikhs (initiated Sikhs) they may also take part in showing devotion to the GGS by washing the floor in the sanctum of the Golden Temple with milk. • Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan were instrumental in building the Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple) and surrounding complex at Amritsar and so Sikhs may feel a connection to the Gurus when visiting. • Sikhs may choose to go to Anandpur Sahib: Birthplace of the Khalsa, where Guru Gobind Singh initiated the Sikh warrior-saints to learn more about the formation of the first Khalsa. <p><u>Amritsar:</u> Home to the Golden Temple, the spiritual centre of Sikhism. Pilgrims bathe in the Amrit Sarovar, seeking spiritual cleansing and connection with Waheguru. Amritsar, is the home to</p>

<p>The role, significance and features of the following sites of Sikh pilgrimage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amritsar • Anandpur Sahib. <p>Sikh identity and belonging expressed through symbolic actions - the 5Ks:</p>	<p>the Golden Temple (Harmandir Sahib), is the heart of Sikh spirituality. It's a place of peace and equality, where millions come every year to pray and reflect. Surrounded by the sacred pool (Amrit Sarovar), the temple's golden beauty and the continuous recitation of the Guru Granth Sahib create a calming and uplifting experience.</p> <p><u>Anandpur Sahib</u>: Birthplace of the Khalsa, where Guru Gobind Singh initiated the Sikh warrior-saints. It symbolises courage, devotion and Sikh identity. Anandpur Sahib, known as the "Holy City of Bliss", is deeply meaningful to Sikhs. It's where Guru Gobind Singh created the Khalsa in 1699, shaping Sikh identity. Pilgrims visit its historic gurdwaras, especially during Hola Mohalla, to connect with their faith and history. Anandpur Sahib is a place of inspiration, devotion, and cultural celebration.</p> <p>At Anandpur Sahib, Sikhs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in spiritual reflection, prayer, and connect with the rich history of their faith. • Pilgrims visit its historic gurdwaras, such as <i>Takht Sri Kesgarh Sahib</i>, one of the five seats of Sikh authority, where Guru Gobind Singh established the Khalsa in 1699. • They listen to hymns, partake in the community kitchen (langar), and reflect on the teachings of the Gurus. • During <i>Hola Mohalla</i>, a vibrant annual festival, Sikhs gather for displays of martial arts, mock battles and processions, showcasing the spirit of bravery and community. <p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching ideas can be found on the WJEC Eduqas digital resources area with a printable download here: <u>Sikhism_C6a_Pilgrimage_resource.pdf</u> • And a ranking activity online: <u>Pilgrimage ranking</u>
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		<p>Suggested Learning Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners could draw and/or label a bird's eye view of each place of pilgrimage and annotate with reasons why the features are at each of the sites of pilgrimage, e.g. pool of nectar at Amritsar, allowing devotees to bathe and purify themselves. <p>Learners should know the items of identity and why Sikhs choose to wear the items collectively, as well as the symbolic meaning behind each item.</p> <p>The 5Ks are physical symbols of Sikh identity, reflecting spiritual values and the commitment of initiated Sikhs (Khalsa) to their faith:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kesh (uncut hair): Symbolises respect for God's creation and spiritual devotion. This is the uncut hair and beard, symbolising the rejection of pride and the appreciation of God's gift of creation. Kara (steel bracelet): Represents unity with God and moral restraint. It also reminds them that God is eternal. Kanga (wooden comb): Emphasises cleanliness and order in life. This is the comb that reminds them that God is there to remove the tangles from their life and can always be turned to. Kaccha (cotton undergarments): These shorts remind them of the clothes worn by soldiers who fought for the faith. They also symbolise sexual restraint. Kirpan (ceremonial sword): Signifies courage, protection of the weak and the protection of those who are oppressed, it also symbolises the fight for justice. <p>Sikhs adopt the 5Ks for a number of reasons, including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As it was instructed by Guru Gobind Singh. As a sign of Sikh identity and belonging. To show they are Amritdhari (initiated Sikhs) who have undergone Amrit Sanskar (the initiation ceremony).
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To follow the requirements laid out in the Rehet Maryada (the Sikh code of conduct) they agree to follow after their initiation. As Sahajdhari (non-initiated Sikhs) to show they belong to the faith and may one day undergo Amrit Sanskar. <p>Suggested Learning Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hands-On Activity: Display the 5Ks or provide images, encouraging discussion about their meanings and practical significance. Comparison Activity: Explore parallels with Christian symbolism such as the Christian cross. Reflection Exercise: Ask learners to consider how physical symbols might reinforce identity and values. Role-Play: Learners present scenarios where the 5Ks guide moral decisions, such as standing up for justice.
1.7.2e Sikhism and morality	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Sikh beliefs and teachings about how to make moral decisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> using seva as a guide to ethical service - social justice out of a love for Waheguru and humanity Kirat Karo (working honestly) as one of the 3 pillars of Sikhism avoiding the 5 vices and develop the 5 virtues in order to progress on the spiritual path towards unity (mukti) with Waheguru. <p>The connection between karma, rebirth and morality in Sikhism.</p>	<p>Learners should know how Sikh teachings emphasise ethical decision-making. This could be through <u>seva</u> (selfless service), driven by love for Waheguru and humanity. Sikhs believe that serving others leads to social justice and spiritual growth. Seva (selfless service) is a core practice, categorised into:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taan: Physical service, like preparing food in a langar. Maan: Mental service, including teaching or offering emotional support. Dhan: Material service, such as donating resources to those in need. <p><u>Kirat Karo</u> (honest work) is a key pillar of Sikhism, encouraging individuals to earn a living with integrity and contribute positively to society.</p> <p>Learners should know Sikhs aim to overcome the 5 vices (lust, anger, greed, attachment and ego) and develop the 5 virtues (truth, compassion, contentment, humility and love). By cultivating these virtues, Sikhs progress spiritually and move closer to union with</p>

	<p>Waheguru, achieving <u>mukti</u> (liberation). Through avoiding the five vices and cultivating the five virtues, Sikhs are more likely to act morally, gain good karma and a positive rebirth.</p> <p>In Sikhism, the five vices (<i>Panj Chor</i>) and five virtues are central concepts that guide moral and spiritual life.</p> <p>Five Vices (Panj Chor):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Lust (Kaam): Excessive desires and uncontrolled passions.2. Anger (Krodh): Uncontrolled rage and destructive emotions.3. Greed (Lobh): An insatiable desire for material possessions.4. Attachment (Moh): Over-attachment to people, possessions or worldly things.5. Ego (Ahankar): Excessive pride and self-centeredness. <p>Virtues:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Truth (Sat): Honesty and living in harmony with truth.2. Compassion (Daya): Empathy and kindness towards others.3. Contentment (Santokh): Being satisfied and at peace with what one has.4. Humility (Nimrata): Modesty and the absence of ego.5. Love (Pyar): Unconditional love for all beings and devotion to God. <p>Suggested Learning Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Case Studies: Present real-world dilemmas and ask learners to consider Sikh ethical responses, using the principles of seva and honest work.• Virtue vs. Vice Discussion: Encourage learners to discuss how developing virtues and avoiding vices impacts daily decisions.• Role-Play: Create scenarios where learners practice making ethical decisions based on Sikh teachings.
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Non-religious perspectives

1.8 Beliefs about life and death – Non-religious beliefs		
	Content Amplification	Teacher Guidance
1.8.1 Non-religious perspectives on the meaning of life	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Non-religious perspectives on the meaning of life, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no agreed meaning of life • individuals determine their own life's meaning • people should be free to live their lives as long as they do not harm others • some people gain a sense of meaning in their lives through, for example, engagement with the natural world and spending time in nature • Humanist beliefs on what gives life meaning, including autonomy, ethical living, responsibility, pursuit of fulfilment and pursuit of happiness. 	<p>Non-religious perspectives on the meaning of life often focus on individual, subjective and human-centred approaches.</p> <p>Non-religious views include the views of atheists, agnostics, Humanists and others.</p> <p>Non-religious people will often emphasise personal fulfilment and that individuals should be free to live their lives (autonomy) as long as they do not harm others. Some find meaning through their relationships with others and contributing to the well-being of others. Some find meaning in pursuing happiness, creativity or knowledge, while others emphasize leaving a positive impact on the world for future generations, and others from spending time in nature. Some philosophical perspectives, such as existentialism, argue that individuals create their own meaning in a universe without inherent purpose. For many, such as Humanists, the meaning of life is found in experiencing life as fully as possible, seeking connections with others and the natural world around them, and striving for personal and shared growth. Humanists find meaning in ethical living such as helping others, and promoting human welfare and justice, valuing the dignity and worth of every individual.</p> <p>The Humanist website is a useful resource: Think for yourself, act for everyone.</p> <p>There is also a summary of Humanist belief here: How can I be happy? Narrated by Stephen Fry #thatshumanism - YouTube</p>

<p>1.8.2 Non-religious perspectives on life and death</p>	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Non-religious perspectives on life and death, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • death as an end of existence • no future reward or punishment • the significance and value of having no belief in the soul or life after death. 	<p>Non-religious perspectives on life and death often emphasize the material and <u>finite nature of existence</u>, focusing on the here and now rather than an afterlife. Life is viewed as an opportunity for personal growth, relationships and contributing to society or the planet. Non-religious people often believe that humans have no spiritual dimension, and therefore death is seen as a natural end to consciousness and the physical body. There is no evidence of an afterlife and <u>no judgement based on earthly actions</u>. The physical body is recycled into the environment. This may inspire individuals to <u>cherish the present life greatly and leave a positive legacy</u>. Without belief in an afterlife, <u>meaning is often derived from human experiences, accomplishments, and the impact a person has on others and the world around them</u>. Non-religious people may suggest that humans should live morally good lives because it shows compassion for others and respect for self.</p>
<p>1.8.3 Non-religious practices</p>	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Non-religious mourning practices, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no specific, agreed mourning customs • mourning as an expression of grief • celebration and remembrance of the life of the deceased • mourning as providing a supportive environment for those who are grieving. <p>Non-religious funeral practices, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no specific, agreed burial or cremation structure • celebrant may lead a service • eulogy may be given as a celebration of life • music is usually used during the service. 	<p>For non-religious people there are no specific, agreed mourning customs and people will express their grief in a way that feels appropriate for them and their loved one. Family and friends will provide a supportive environment for those who are grieving the loss of a loved one. They will often hold a ceremony to mark the end of the loved one's life, and this is usually a celebration and remembrance of the life of the deceased.</p> <p>Many people choose to have a non-religious funeral service. This may be a personal ceremony where the music and readings have no mention of God or an afterlife. The ceremony may be led by a <u>non-religious or Humanist celebrant</u> (this is a person who leads the ceremony and may help the family to tailor the ceremony to the wishes of the individuals involved). The ceremony will focus on the life of the person who has died, reflecting on their qualities, the life they led and their achievements. Each person will make a unique contribution to the world and this will be the focus of the ceremony. An unusual coffin may be chosen to reflect a special aspect of the life of the person who has died, and there will often be a <u>eulogy</u>.</p>

given by a family member or a friend. The people present may light candles as a symbolic act and there may be moments of quiet reflection. The music or songs may reflect the interests of the person and there may be non-religious readings, such as poetry. A non-religious funeral could be a burial or a cremation and will provide a supportive environment for any loved ones who are grieving their loss. However, there is no specific agreed burial or cremation structure, and people will have the celebration they feel is appropriate for their loved one.

A useful resource can be found here: [A Humanist Funeral - TrueTube](#)

Suggested learning activity: [Humanist funeral extracts](#) - a WJEC resource with learning activities.

1.9 Non-religious beliefs in contemporary society		
Content Amplification		Teacher Guidance
1.9.1 Non-religious perspectives on identity, belonging and practices	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Non-religious perspectives on identity, belonging and practices, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the significance and value of identity and belonging without religion • ways that non-religious people may express a sense of identity and belonging such as being part of charities and organisations that promote good causes. 	<p>Non-religious perspectives on identity, belonging and practices often focus on living in community with other humans and being a positive influence in society, rather than believing in God.</p> <p>Non-religious individuals may view identity as shaped by personal choices, experiences, culture, relationships, and the society and communities in which they live. A non-religious person may emphasise the importance of finding out who they are as a person and allows them to develop their character in any way they feel is appropriate.</p> <p>Community and connection are sought through shared interests and values, such as their belief in equality for all or promoting empathy and justice. They could also connect through important social justice issues, rather than religion and faith. This could include participation in social groups such as the Humanist Association, professional networks such as the Ethical Humanist Society, or involvement in social action, such as lobbying the government to address climate change or racism within society. Many non-religious people emphasise the importance of charity work and will volunteer their time and/or money to respond to those in need, for example fundraising or contributing towards a foodbank.</p> <p>Humanists often reflect their commitment to living thoughtful, ethical and fulfilling lives. Practices for meaning and well-being may involve mindfulness, such as meditation or reflective journaling, which help Humanists to cultivate self-awareness and focus on the present moment, fostering inner peace and clarity. Ethical living is central to their philosophy, as they strive to align their actions with principles of</p>

		<p>fairness, compassion and integrity, whether by making sustainable choices, supporting social justice or engaging in community service such as litter picking. Creative expression through art, music, writing or other pursuits provides Humanists with opportunities to explore their individuality and connect with others on a deeper level. Many will emphasise empathy, reason and mutual respect to guide their actions and relationships. Through these practices, Humanists actively create lives of purpose and meaning, which contribute positively to both their own personal growth and that of the broader community.</p> <p>Suggested learning activity: Is this secularism?</p> <p>Learners could read the following fact sheet and create a short presentation on Humanist charities. Humanism and charity</p>
1.9.2 Non-religious perspectives towards morality	<p>Learners should understand:</p> <p>Ways in which non-religious believers make moral decisions, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the use of conscience • the use of reason and free will • the act itself (absolutism) • the situation (relativism) in which the act is performed and the consequences (consequentialism) of it. 	<p>Non-religious people try to bring about a fairer and more compassionate society through respect for others and the need for cooperation. They use human reason to decide on the best course of action and will freely make decisions. Some non-religious people believe humans have a <u>conscience (a natural, human capacity for moral awareness and decision-making, grounded in empathy, reason and social understanding)</u> to help them decide right and wrong actions, but they do not believe that this is God-given. Morality is viewed as a product of human nature, culture and the need for the well-being of all members of society. Humans have <u>free will</u> and therefore must take responsibility for their actions and the impact they have on others.</p> <p>Some non-religious people may believe that certain actions are always wrong, such as murder. This is called absolutism. Others may believe that one must take into account the <u>situation</u> in which the act is performed (relativism), or that the <u>consequences</u> of any action must be taken into account first (consequentialism).</p>

		<p>Suggested learning activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learners could read the moral dilemmas (Moral dilemmas (11+)) on the sheet and respond to them from a Humanist viewpoint and compare these to the viewpoints of the religious believers in the religions they are studying.
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Glossary of terms for Unit 1

Christianity

Term	Definition
Absolutism	The belief that certain actions are always wrong, such as murder.
Afterlife	Life after death; the belief that existence continues after physical death.
Agapè	Selfless, sacrificial, unconditional love. Christianity holds agape to be the highest types of love, epitomised by Jesus' sacrifice on the cross for the salvation of humanity and in teachings such as 'Love your neighbour'.
Agnostic	Individuals who neither affirm nor deny the existence of God or gods, often believing that the existence of a divine being is unknowable or undecided.
Apostles' Creed	A statement of Christian beliefs, summarising faith in God the Father, Jesus Christ as the Son and the Holy Spirit. It affirms key doctrines like creation, Christ's life, death, resurrection, ascension, the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. It is widely used in Christian worship and as a declaration of faith.
Ascension	The event in Christian belief when Jesus Christ, after his resurrection, was taken up into heaven in the presence of his disciples. It marks the end of his earthly ministry and his return to God the Father.
Atheist	Atheists do not believe in the existence of any gods or divine beings. They often emphasise the importance of scientific inquiry and empirical evidence to understand the world. Atheists may reject religious beliefs as unsupported by reason or evidence, focusing instead on human experiences, values and the material world.
Atonement	The belief that Jesus' death and resurrection healed the rift between humans and God, thereby opening the way for God and people to be 'at one' again.
Baptism	This sacrament is a rite of initiation, through which people become members of the Church. The word 'baptise' means to immerse in water. Water is used as a symbol of the washing away of sin.
Bible	Christian sacred text believed by Christians to be revealed and/or inspired by God, made up of the Old and New Testaments.
Confirmation	A rite through which a person who has been baptised (particularly one baptised as an infant) affirms their Christian belief and is recognised as full member of the Church.

Conscience	The word conscience comes from the Latin words ‘con’ meaning ‘with’ and ‘scientia’ meaning ‘knowledge’. Christians believe that conscience is a God-given ability to know the difference between right and wrong, and part of being created imago Dei.
Consequentialism	The belief that the consequences of any action must be taken into account before making any moral decisions.
Conservative	Most Christians, including Catholics, are conservative Christians. Whilst they believe that the Bible is the revealed and inspired Word of God, they consider other factors need to be considered in discovering the meaning of the Bible. Catholics believe that readers must use their intelligence, the guidance of the Holy Spirit and Church teachings in order to understand the writers’ intentions fully.
Creator Ex Nihilo	The belief that God created the universe ‘from nothing’.
Crucifixion	Death on a cross. The way in which Jesus was killed.
Decalogue	The Decalogue refers to the Ten Commandments, a set of moral and religious laws given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai, as recorded in the Bible.
Encyclical	An encyclical is a formal letter or teaching document written by the Pope which provides guidance on important theological, moral or social issues, reflecting the Church's position and encouraging reflection and action.
Eternal	Everlasting or without end.
Eucharist	Meaning ‘thanksgiving’ and also called ‘Holy Communion’. The service which celebrates the death and resurrection of Jesus. Bread and wine represent (or, as some Christians such as Catholics believe, actually become) the body and blood of Jesus. The Eucharist is a re-enactment of the Last Supper.
Eulogy	A speech or written tribute delivered in honour of someone who has died.
Forgiveness	To grant pardon for a wrongdoing; to give up resentment and the desire to seek revenge against a wrongdoer.
Free Will	The ability to make choices (particularly moral choices) voluntarily and independently. The belief that nothing is predetermined.
Funeral	The way in which a deceased person is celebrated and remembered at the end of their life. This is usually a ceremony or service.
God	The supreme, eternal and omnipotent being in monotheistic religions like Christianity, Judaism and Islam. God is understood as the creator and sustainer of the universe, who exists beyond time and space.

Heaven	A 'place' or 'state' in the afterlife where those who have accepted God's grace and forgiveness in this life will enjoy an eternal existence in God's presence in the next life.
Hell	A 'place' or 'state' of punishment in the afterlife for those who, through their own free will, reject God's grace and forgiveness and will have chosen to live eternally outside of God's presence.
Holy Communion	Holy Communion refers to the Eucharist, the sacrament by which Christians receive spiritual nourishment in the bread and wine. It fosters unity with Christ and fellowship with the community.
Humanist	Humanists do not believe in any gods or divine beings. They often emphasise the value of human beings and seek to promote human flourishing through reason, science and ethical principles. Humanists typically believe that meaning, purpose and morality are derived from human experience and the development of society rather than religious sources. They advocate for compassion, justice and the well-being of others, often placing emphasis on individual responsibility and the betterment of humanity.
Imago Dei	'In the image of God'. The belief that human beings are uniquely a reflection of God's personhood. Unlike the other animals, human beings are rational, free and moral.
Incarnation	'Made flesh' - the Christian belief that God became man in the person of Jesus, fully human and fully divine. God becoming human in the form of Jesus.
Inconsistent Triad	JL Mackie identified the 'inconsistent triad', where he suggested that the following three (triad) things are inconsistent as they cannot all be true at the same time: if God is omnipotent (all-powerful) and omnibenevolent (all-loving), then evil would not exist. However, we have experienced evil and know that it exists. Therefore, either God is not all-powerful because he cannot stop suffering, or he is not all-loving because he doesn't want to stop suffering. This dilemma is called the Problem of Evil.
Liberal	Liberal Christians see the Bible more as a personal guide to living a life pleasing to God, rather than something to be strictly followed. They may suggest that the Bible is written about God and contains useful information to help believers understand their faith better but that, as it was written by humans inspired by God, it could contain errors. For example, the creation story in Genesis simply helps humans to understand that God is the creator of the world.
Literal	Some Christians are called literalists and believe that every word of the Bible is literally true. For example, a literalist would believe that God created the world in six days (24-hour periods) and created a man on the sixth day and made a woman out of man's rib as this is how the first two chapters of the book of Genesis described it.

Messiah	The word means 'the Anointed One'. The Messiah is the one believed to be sent by God to be humanity's saviour. Christians believe this person to be Jesus.
Monotheist	A person who believes in one God, such as Christians, Jews and Muslims.
Moral Evil	Suffering caused by the actions of humans.
Mourning	A time of grieving caused by the death of a loved one.
Natural Evil	Suffering caused by natural events.
Nicene Creed	A statement of Christian faith formulated at the First Council of Nicaea in AD 325 and later expanded at the First Council of Constantinople in AD 381. It defines key Christian doctrines about the nature of God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.
Omnibenevolent	The state of being all-loving and infinitely good - a characteristic often attributed to God.
Omnipotent	The all-powerful, almighty and unlimited nature of God.
Omnipresent	Present everywhere at all times.
Omniscient	The all-knowing nature of God.
Parable	An earthly story with a heavenly meaning. Jesus used parables during his ministry to share important truths.
Parousia	The Second Coming of Jesus.
Pilgrimage	A journey made to a sacred place as an act of worship or devotion, e.g. Christians may visit Jerusalem to walk in Jesus' footsteps.
Polytheist	Theists who believe in the existence of multiple gods, as seen in religions like Hinduism (in some interpretations) and ancient Greek or Roman religions.
Purgatory	The process of being purified of sin before uniting with God in heaven.
Relativism	The belief that humans must base their decisions on a situation-by-situation basis and always take into account the situation in which an act is performed.
Religious Pluralist	People who believe that multiple religions can offer valid paths to truth, spirituality or salvation, and that no single religion has a monopoly on truth.
Requiem Mass	The Catholic service of worship that includes the funeral of a believer.
Resurrection	The belief that Jesus rose from the dead on the third day from when he was crucified, thereby conquering death. It is commemorated annually on Easter Sunday.
Rite of Committal	A Christian ceremony that takes place at a cemetery or crematorium, marking the final part of the funeral service. The rite often includes prayers, scripture readings and the blessing of the grave, symbolising hope in the resurrection and the promise of eternal life.

Sacrament	<p>Outward signs of inward grace, ordained by Jesus Christ, by which grace is given to the soul. Sacraments are rituals which bring into existence the thing that they signify. The Catholic Church recognises seven sacraments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baptism • Reconciliation (also called Penance or Confession) • Eucharist (also called Holy Communion) • Confirmation • Marriage (also called Matrimony) • Holy Orders (also called Ordination) • Sacrament of the Sick.
Salvation	To be saved. The promise of eternal life offered through the sacrifice of Jesus.
Soul	The spiritual aspect of a being; that which connects someone to God. The soul is often regarded as non-physical and as living on after physical death, in an afterlife.
Soul-deciding Theodicy	Saint Augustine believed that suffering was the fault of humans and angels who used their free will to turn away from God. Humans and angels are to blame for the suffering in the world not God. Augustine taught that God gives humans the chance to be forgiven for sin through Jesus' death on the cross. If humans turn back to God, then they will be in Heaven (soul-deciding theodicy)
Soul-making Theodicy	Saint Irenaeus believed that God made mankind in his 'image to grow into his likeness'. God allows humans to suffer so that humans grow to be more like him. God has given humans free will and we can make good or bad choices. Irenaeus believed that all humans will be in heaven (soul-making theodicy).
Ten Commandments	A Divine Command from God to shape human behaviour. Ten rules that help believers understand morally right behaviour.
Theist	A person who believes in the existence of a god or gods.
Theodicy	The word theodicy comes from two Greek terms: Theos - God and Dike – Justice. A theodicy attempts to justify the existence of an omnipotent and omnibenevolent God in the light of the existence of evil.
Transcendent	Something that exists outside of time and space, and beyond human understanding.
Trinity	The three persons of God; God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit
Vigil Service	A service that takes place the evening before an important event. For example, this usually takes place the evening before a funeral and includes the Reception of the Body.

Catholic Christianity

Term	Definition
Absolutism	The belief that certain actions are always wrong, such as murder.
Afterlife	Life after death; the belief that existence continues after physical death.
Agapè	Selfless, sacrificial, unconditional love. Christianity holds agape to be the highest types of love, epitomised by Jesus' sacrifice on the cross for the salvation of humanity and in teachings such as 'Love your neighbour'.
Agnostic	Individuals who neither affirm nor deny the existence of God or gods, often believing that the existence of a divine being is unknowable or undecided.
Apostles' Creed	A statement of Christian beliefs, summarising faith in God the Father, Jesus Christ as the Son and the Holy Spirit. It affirms key doctrines like creation, Christ's life, death, resurrection, ascension, the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. It is widely used in Christian worship and as a declaration of faith.
Ascension	The event in Christian belief when Jesus Christ, after his resurrection, was taken up into heaven in the presence of his disciples. It marks the end of his earthly ministry and his return to God the Father.
Atheist	Atheists do not believe in the existence of any gods or divine beings. They often emphasise the importance of scientific inquiry and empirical evidence to understand the world. Atheists may reject religious beliefs as unsupported by reason or evidence, focusing instead on human experiences, values and the material world.
Atonement	The belief that Jesus' death and resurrection healed the rift between humans and God, thereby opening the way for God and people to be 'at one' again.
Baptism	The first Sacrament of Initiation, where a person is welcomed into the Christian community. This sacrament is a rite of initiation, through which people become members of the Church. The word 'baptise' means to immerse in water. Water is used as a symbol of the washing away of sin.
Bible	The holy book for Christians. It is a book which has been inspired by the Holy Spirit and is 'God-breathed', therefore it is an important source of wisdom and authority for Catholics. It is the revealed and inspired Word of God, so Catholics will turn to it for guidance. Christian sacred text believed by Christians to be revealed and/or inspired by God, made up of the Old and New Testaments.
Catechism of the Catholic Church	The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) is a comprehensive summary of Catholic doctrine, presenting the Church's teachings on faith, morals and practices.

Confirmation	A rite through which a person who has been baptised (particularly one baptised as an infant) affirms their Christian belief and is recognised as full member of the Church.
Conscience	Human reason making moral decisions. The knowledge we have of what is right and wrong and the God-given compulsion within all human beings to do what is right and to avoid what is evil.
Consequentialism	The belief that the consequences of any action must be taken into account before making any moral decisions.
Conservative	Most Christians, including Catholics, are conservative Christians. Whilst they believe that the Bible is the revealed and inspired Word of God, they consider other factors need to be considered in discovering the meaning of the Bible. Catholics believe that readers must use their intelligence, the guidance of the Holy Spirit and Church teachings in order to understand the writers' intentions fully.
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Decalogue	The Decalogue refers to the Ten Commandments, a set of moral and religious laws given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai, as recorded in the Bible.
Encyclical	An encyclical is a formal letter or teaching document written by the Pope which provides guidance on important theological, moral or social issues, reflecting the Church's position and encouraging reflection and action.
Eternal	Everlasting or without end.
Eucharist	Meaning 'thanksgiving' and also called 'Holy Communion'. The service which celebrates the death and Resurrection of Jesus. Bread and wine represent (or, as some Christians such as Catholics believe, actually become) the body and blood of Jesus. The Eucharist is a re-enactment of the Last Supper.
Eulogy	A speech or written tribute delivered in honour of someone who has died.
Forgiveness	To grant pardon for a wrongdoing; to give up resentment and the desire to seek revenge against a wrongdoer.
Free Will	The ability to make choices (particularly moral choices) voluntarily and independently. The belief that nothing is predetermined.
Funeral	The way in which a deceased person is celebrated and remembered at the end of their life. This is usually a ceremony or service.
God	The supreme, eternal, and omnipotent being in monotheistic religions like Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. God is understood as the creator and sustainer of the universe, who exists beyond time and space.

Heaven	A 'place' or 'state' in the afterlife where those who have accepted God's grace and forgiveness in this life will enjoy an eternal existence in God's presence in the next life.
Hell	A 'place' or 'state' of punishment in the afterlife for those who, through their own free will, reject God's grace and forgiveness and will have chosen to live eternally outside of God's presence.
Holy Communion	Holy Communion refers to the Eucharist, the sacrament by which Christians receive spiritual nourishment in the bread and wine. It fosters unity with Christ and fellowship with the community.
Humanist	Humanists do not believe in any gods or divine beings. They often emphasise the value of human beings and seek to promote human flourishing through reason, science and ethical principles. Humanists typically believe that meaning, purpose and morality are derived from human experience and the development of society rather than religious sources. They advocate for compassion, justice and the well-being of others, often placing emphasis on individual responsibility and the betterment of humanity.
Imago Dei	'In the image of God'. The belief that human beings are uniquely a reflection of God's personhood. Unlike the other animals, human beings are rational, free and moral.
Incarnation	'Made flesh' - the Christian belief that God became man in the person of Jesus, fully human and fully divine. God becoming human in the form of Jesus.
Inconsistent Triad	JL Mackie identified the 'inconsistent triad', where he suggested that the following three (triad) things are inconsistent as they cannot all be true at the same time: if God is omnipotent (all-powerful) and omnibenevolent (all-loving), then evil would not exist. However, we have experienced evil and know that it exists. Therefore, either God is not all-powerful because he cannot stop suffering, or he is not all-loving because he doesn't want to stop suffering. This dilemma is called the Problem of Evil.
Liberal	Liberal Christians see the Bible more as a personal guide to living a life pleasing to God, rather than something to be strictly followed. They may suggest that the Bible is written about God and contains useful information to help believers understand their faith better, but that as it was written by humans inspired by God, it could contain errors. For example, the Creation story in Genesis simply helps humans to understand that God is the Creator of the world.
Literal	Some Christians are called literalists and believe that every word of the Bible is literally true. For example, a literalist would believe that God created the world in six days (24-hour periods) and created a man on the sixth day and made a woman out of man's rib as this is how the first two chapters of the book of Genesis described it.

Messiah	The word means 'the Anointed One'. The Messiah is the one believed to be sent by God to be humanity's saviour. Christians believe this person to be Jesus.
Monotheist	A person who believes in one God, such as Christians, Jews and Muslims.
Moral Evil	Suffering caused by the actions of humans.
Mourning	A time of grieving caused by the death of a loved one.
Natural Evil	Suffering caused by natural events.
Nicene Creed	A statement of Christian faith formulated at the First Council of Nicaea in AD 325 and later expanded at the First Council of Constantinople in AD 381. It defines key Christian doctrines about the nature of God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.
Omnibenevolent	The state of being all-loving and infinitely good - a characteristic often attributed to God
Omnipotent	The all-powerful, almighty and unlimited nature of God.
Omnipresent	Present everywhere at all times.
Omniscient	The all-knowing nature of God.
Parable	An earthly story with a heavenly meaning. Jesus used parables during his ministry to share important truths.
Parousia	The Second Coming of Jesus.
Pilgrimage	A journey made to a sacred place as an act of worship or devotion. A Catholic may also regard their journey through life itself as a pilgrimage.
Polytheist	Theists who believe in the existence of multiple gods, as seen in religions like Hinduism (in some interpretations) and ancient Greek or Roman religions.
Primary Precepts	St Thomas Aquinas' five primary precepts are fundamental moral principles that reflect natural law theory. They are intended to guide human behaviour according to reason and the pursuit of the common good. They are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Preservation of life</u> – The duty to protect and sustain human life. • <u>Reproduction</u> – The natural drive to continue human existence through procreation. • <u>Education</u> – The responsibility to educate and care for one's children. • <u>Worship God</u> – The obligation to worship and seek a relationship with God. • <u>Live in an ordered society</u> – The need to work for the common good and cooperate with others.
Purgatory	The process of being purified of sin before uniting with God in heaven.
Relativism	The belief that the humans must base their decisions on a situation by situation basis, and always into account the situation in which an act is performed.

Religious Pluralist	People who believe that multiple religions can offer valid paths to truth, spirituality or salvation, and that no single religion has a monopoly on truth.
Requiem Mass	The Catholic service of worship that includes the funeral of a believer.
Resurrection	The belief that Jesus rose from the dead on the third day from when he was crucified, thereby conquering death. It is commemorated annually on Easter Sunday.
Rite of Committal	A Christian ceremony that takes place at a cemetery or crematorium, marking the final part of the funeral service. The rite often includes prayers, scripture readings and the blessing of the grave, symbolising hope in the resurrection and the promise of eternal life.
Sacrament	<p>Outward signs of inward grace, ordained by Jesus Christ, by which grace is given to the soul. Sacraments are rituals which bring into existence the thing that they signify. The Catholic Church recognises seven sacraments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baptism • Reconciliation (also called Penance or Confession) • Eucharist (also called Holy Communion) • Confirmation • Marriage (also called Matrimony) • Holy Orders (also called Ordination) • Sacrament of the Sick
Salvation	To be saved. The promise of eternal life offered through the sacrifice of Jesus.
Soul	The spiritual aspect of a being; that which connects someone to God. The soul is often regarded as non-physical and as living on after physical death, in an afterlife.
Soul-deciding Theodicy	Saint Augustine believed that suffering was the fault of humans and angels who used their free will to turn away from God. Humans and angels are to blame for the suffering in the world not God. Augustine taught that God gives humans the chance to be forgiven for sin through Jesus' death on the cross. If humans turn back to God, then they will be in Heaven (soul-deciding theodicy).
Soul-making Theodicy	Saint Irenaeus believed that God made mankind in his 'image to grow into his likeness'. God allows humans to suffer so that humans grow to be more like him. God has given humans free will and we can make good or bad choices. Irenaeus believed that all humans will be in heaven (soul-making theodicy).
Ten Commandments	A Divine Command from God to shape human behaviour. Ten rules that help believers understand morally right behaviour.
Theist	A person who believes in the existence of a god or gods.

Theodicy	The word theodicy comes from two Greek terms: Theos - God and Dike – Justice. A theodicy attempts to justify the existence of an omnipotent and omnibenevolent God in the light of the existence of evil.
Transcendent	Something that exists outside of time and space, and beyond human understanding.
Trinity	The three persons of God; God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Vigil Service	A service that takes place the evening before an important event. For example, this usually takes place the evening before a funeral and includes the Reception of the Body.

Buddhism

Term	Definition
Anatta	No independent or permanent self or 'soul'.
Anicca	The impermanent nature of all things.
Bodhisattva	An enlightened being, who postpones their own enlightenment in order to seek enlightenment for others by continuing on the wheel of samsara rather than accepting Nirvana/Nibbana.
Dana	Generous giving, charity.
Dharma	The teachings of the Buddha.
Dukkha	Suffering/unsatisfactoriness.
Enlightenment	The goal of Buddhism, achieved by following the Noble Eightfold Path.
Five Precepts	Five rules, or more accurately goals to live up to for all Buddhists. Buddhists aim to refrain from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • harming living things • taking what is not freely given • sexual misconduct • misuse of speech • clouding the mind with intoxicating substances.
Five Skandhas	The five elements that make up a human being: form, sensation, perception, mental formations and consciousness.
Four Noble Truths	The Buddha's first teaching: Suffering - the cause of suffering, the end of suffering and the means by which to end suffering.
Karma	The belief that actions, and the consequences of these actions, determine whether the atman will be released from the cycle of birth, death and rebirth; one could gain positive and/or negative karma.
Karuna	Compassion for all living beings.
Mahayana	'Great Vehicle'; a more liberal, progressive version of Buddhism. Mahayana Buddhism recognises a large amount of scripture outside of the Pali canon.
Malas	Beads that are used during meditation as an aid to concentration.
Mandalas	Geometric patterns that represent enlightenment; they often symbolise anicca as they are destroyed soon after completion.
Mantras	Words or phrases that are chanted and repeated to aid concentration.
Meditation (samadhi)	One of the parts of the Noble Eightfold Path; the practice of training the mind to concentrate and develop mindfulness.
Metta	Loving kindness.
Mettabhavana	The development of the four types of loving kindness, usually through meditation.

Morality (sila)	One of the parts of the Noble Eightfold Path; the principles of right or wrong behaviour.
Nirvana	A state of peace and joy, achieved once craving has been overcome.
Noble Eightfold Path	The ‘medicine’ of the Four Noble Truths. Eight steps towards overcoming suffering and desires and achieving Nibbana (Nirvana). Commonly divided into three sections: Wisdom, Morality and Meditation.
Pratitya	Dependent origination: everything ‘exists’ only because of the ‘existence’ of other phenomena in an incredibly complex web of cause and effect covering time past, time present and time future.
Rebirth	Belief that the power of karma generates another existence after death. Buddhists do not believe in a permanent soul that moves from one life to another, but that some form of consciousness moves on.
Samatha	Calm or breathing meditation.
Samsara	The constant change or cycle of the world through a process of birth, death and being reborn through reincarnation.
Sangha	The community of Buddhists. This can be lay or monastic.
Six Paramitas	Qualities that need to be developed in order to move towards enlightenment; mainly found in Mahayana Buddhism.
Theravada	‘The Way of the Elders’; the more traditional of the two major traditions of Buddhism. They accept only the teachings of the Pali Canon.
Three Marks of Existence (Lakshanas)	The truth of everyone’s life – anatta (no permanent self), anicca, (everything is impermanent) and dukkha (suffering).
Three Poisons	Greed, hatred and ignorance – negative emotions that keep someone in samsara.
Triratna	‘The Three Jewels’ to which Buddhists ‘go for refuge’: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Buddha • The Dharma (Dhamma) • The Sangha.
Vipassana	‘Insight’ meditation enabling the individual to see the true nature of things.
Wisdom (panna)	One of the parts of the Noble Eightfold Path.

Hinduism

Term	Definition
Ahimsa	Non-injury to living things; the doctrine of non-violence.
Antaryami	Often used to describe Brahman as the source of all life and in all things.
Antyesti	The name given to the Hindu funeral rite – literally translated as ‘last sacrifice’.
Artha	One of the four aims of human life – wealth and power.
Arti	A form of Hindu worship/prayer in which burning lamps are waved before the murtis (statues) of the gods to invoke their presence.
Ashrama(s)	The four stages of life: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the student stage - Brahmachari • the householder stage - Grihasta • the retired life/hermit stage - Vanaprastha • the wandering monk stage – Sannyasa.
Asuri Sampad	Demonic or evil qualities within a person that prevents them attaining moksha.
Atman	The individual self or soul, which is believed to be non-physical and return to Brahman once moksha is achieved.
Avatar	The incarnations (divine becoming human) of a deity, sometimes in human form; most commonly used is Vishnu, the Preserver God, who was incarnated through Krishna.
Ayodhya	Place of pilgrimage for followers of Vishnu. Believed to be the birthplace of Rama.
Bhagavad Gita	The Hindu holy book; the “Song of the Lord”.
Bhagavata Purana	The Hindu holy book written in Sanskrit that promotes devotion to Krishna.
Bhakti	Devotion. In bhakti traditions it is believed that love of God is the path to moksha (spiritual liberation).
Brahma	The Creator God – one of the members of the Trimurti.
Brahman	The supreme power in the Universe; ultimate reality; God.
Brihadaranyaka Upanishad	One of the oldest Upanishads. Translates to ‘the great wilderness or forest’ and talks about central philosophical concepts in Hinduism.
Chandogya Upanishad	One of the oldest Upanishads it is a core text for Vedanta Hinduism. It contains information on reincarnation and the consequences of karma.
Daivi Sampad	Divine or good qualities within a person that helps them attain moksha.

Dana	The practice of generosity.
Deity	A god or goddess.
Dharma	The religious and moral duty in relation to a person's status in Hindu society, considered by many, but not all, to be linked to caste.
Durga	Goddess connected with protection, strength, motherhood and war. She is celebrated during the festival of Navaratri.
Dvaita Vedanta	The belief that the atman (soul) is separate from Brahman.
Ganesh	The elephant-headed God; god of good beginnings; symbol of luck and remover of obstacles. He is often the first to be worshipped.
Ganges	The most sacred river in India. Believed to be the source of life.
Hindu	A person who follows Hinduism.
Hinduism	The largest religion in India. The name was given by others to the people who lived near the Indus River.
Indus Valley	The Northwestern area of South Asia from which the term 'Hinduism' was derived.
Kama	One of the four aims of human life for Hindus 'meaning worldly pleasure.'
Karma	The belief that actions, and the consequences of these actions, determine whether the atman will be released from the cycle of birth, death and rebirth. One could gain positive and/or negative karma.
Karma Yoga	Selfless action.
Katha Upanishad	One of the oldest texts in Hinduism. It is a series of poems representing a conversation between two wise men.
Krishna	An avatar of Vishnu, which is worshipped widely.
Kurma Purana	A Medieval era Vaishnavism holy text.
Lakshmi	The goddess of wealth and fortune and wife of Vishnu – the Preserver God. Popular at the time of Diwali when diva lamps are put in windows to attract her attention.
Mandir	A Hindu place of worship or shrine.
Mantra	A sacred verse from the ancient scriptures that is repeated before and during worship; usually written in Sanskrit.
Maya	A love of money, possessions and family which keeps a Hindu bound to this world.
Moksha	Release from the cycle of birth, death and rebirth; spiritual liberation; ultimate union with God.
Murti	The image and representation of a deity in a temple, shrine or in the home.

Nirguna Brahman	Brahman seen as being ‘without personal qualities’ or a particular form.
Papa	Actions that lead to negative results and spiritually degrade a person.
Pilgrimage	A journey to a place of religious significance undertaken for spiritual gain.
Pinda Daan	A ceremony performed for the souls of the deceased and ancestral spirits.
Prashad	Food offered to the gods and shared with the congregation.
Puja	Prayer/worship of the gods often in the form of murtis.
Punya	Actions that bear positive results and spiritually elevate a person.
Rama	The seventh avatar of Lord Vishnu and the hero of the Ramayana.
Ramayana	One of the two great epics of India that tells the story of Rama, the seventh avatar of Vishnu, and Sita, a princess and avatar of the goddess Lakshmi.
Reincarnation	The rebirth of a soul/atman into a new body after death.
Saguna Brahman	Brahman seen as being ‘with personal qualities’ and form.
Samsara	The constant change or cycle of the world through a process of birth, death and being reborn through reincarnation.
Sanskrit	Language of the ancient scriptures.
Seva	Giving selfless service.
Sewa International	An organisation that supports and serves humanity.
Shaiva / Shaivism	Literally translated as ‘Shiva’s Path’ and refers to groups of Hindus who revere Shiva as the Supreme Being.
Shaiva Bhakti	An act of love and devotion to Shiva performed as an act of worship.
Shiva	The most ancient Hindu deity, the Destroyer God – a member of the Trimurti.
Shraddha Period	It is a ritual performed to show respect to dead ancestors. It is performed during the month of Ashwin.
Tarpana	Offerings given to departed souls or ancestors.
Trimurti	The three major aspects of the Brahman, the supreme power; Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver and Shiva the Destroyer.
Upanishads	The Hindu scriptures; final section of the Vedic scriptures.
Vaishnava / Vaishnavism	The largest Hindu denomination comprised of many subdivisions. They revere Vishnu as the Supreme Being.

Vaishnava Bhakti	An act of love and devotion to Vishnu God performed as an act of worship.
Varanasi	Ancient city in northern India, on the banks of the River Ganges. One of the seven sacred sites of Hinduism, important as a centre of spirituality, where many Hindus aspire to end their lives.
Varna	The Hindu social classes, passed from one generation to the next: the divisions of Hindu society.
Varnashramadharma	The duties performed according to the system of the four varnas and four ashramas.
Vedas	The oldest of the Hindu scriptures that reveal knowledge.
Vishnu	The Preserver God – one of the members of the Trimurti.

Islam

Term	Definition
Akhirah	The Muslim term for the belief in the Final Judgement and life after death.
Allah	Name for God in Islam.
Al-Qadr	The Muslim term for 'predestination' which means Muslims believe God has set out the destiny of all living things.
Beneficent	The characteristics of doing or producing good.
Burkha	A long, loose-fitting garment which covers the whole body from head to feet. It is worn in public by some women, and is compulsory for women in some Islamic countries.
Day of Judgement	The day after the world ends when all humans will be judged by Allah.
Dua	Varying forms of personal prayer.
Eid	Festival in Islam – there are 2 main ones: Eid-ul-Adha and Eid-ul-Fitr.
Five Pillars of Faith	Also known as the Five Pillars of Islam; the basic duties that all Muslims are expected to perform.
Ghusl Mayyit	The process of cleaning and preparing a body after death in Islam; usually completed by a member of the family of the same gender as the deceased.
Greater Jihad	Jihad – striving for Allah. Greater jihad – an inner personal struggle for Allah.
Hadith	Saying; report; account. The sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, as recounted by his household, descendants and companions. These are a major source of Islamic law.
Hajj	Fifth pillar of Islam; pilgrimage to Mecca.
Halal	Any action or thing which is permitted or lawful, often used in reference to foods that are permitted.
Hijab	Often used to describe the headscarf, veil or modest dress worn by many Muslim women, who are required to cover everything except face and hands in the sight of anyone other than immediate family.
Immanent	Characteristic of Allah that suggests he is close and acting within the world.
Jahannam	Concept of hell in Islam.
Jannah	Concept of paradise in Islam.
Kab'ah	Sacred shrine in Mecca.
Kafan	Clothes that are worn by someone who has died when they are buried.
Khalifah	Concept of stewardship in Islam; being a caretaker of the world for Allah.

Malaikah	Islamic word for angels.
Merciful	Characteristic of Allah that says he is forgiving.
Muhammad	The final prophet of Islam, to whom the Qur'an was revealed.
Niqab	Item of dress in Islam worn by Muslim women that covers the face, leaving the eyes visible.
Omnibenevolent	Characteristic of Allah that says he is all-loving.
Omnipotent	Characteristic of Allah that says he is all-powerful.
Omnipresent	Characteristic of Allah that says he is present everywhere.
Omniscient	Characteristic of Allah that says he is all-knowing.
Prophethood	Method used by Allah to communicate with humanity – a prophet is a messenger.
Qur'an	That which is read or recited. The divine book revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. Allah's final revelation to humankind.
Risalah	The message that is passed from Allah to the prophets to share with humanity.
Sadaqah	Voluntary payment or good action for charitable purposes.
Salah	Prescribed communication with and worship of Allah, performed under specific conditions, in the manner taught by the Prophet Muhammad, and recited in Arabic. Muslims believe that the five times of Salat are fixed by Allah.
Sawm	Fasting from just before dawn until sunset. Abstinence is required from all food and drink as well as smoking and sexual relations.
Shahadah	First pillar of Islam – declaration of faith. Declaration of faith, which consists of the statement, 'There is no god except Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah'.
Shariah law	Islamic law.
Shi'a	A type of Muslim – the smallest branch of Islam.
Shirk	Association; regarding anything as being equal or partner to Allah.
Subhah Beads	Beads used to remember the 99 names of Allah.
Sunni	A tyle of Muslim – the largest branch of Islam.
Surah	A chapter of the Qur'an.
Tawhid	'Oneness' in reference to God and is the basic Muslim belief in the oneness of Allah.
Transcendent	A characteristic of Allah that suggests he is beyond human understanding.
Ummah	Means 'community' and refers to the worldwide community of Muslims who share a common religious identity.
Zakah	Purification of wealth by payment of annual almsgiving. An obligatory act of worship.

Judaism

Term	Definition
Aninut	The time between death and the funeral.
Covenant	A solemn and binding promise or agreement between two parties. Covenants were made between God with Noah, Abraham and Moses.
Gan Eden	Paradise. Where the righteous go after death.
Gehenna	Hell. A place of punishment and torture.
Gemilut Hasadim	Acts of loving kindness.
Kippah	A cap usually worn by Jewish boys and men (and sometimes women) during services. Some Jews wear a kippah at all times. It is a reminder of God's presence. A Kippah is often also known as a yarmulke.
Kosher	Means fitting or correct. Refers to food Jews can eat.
Matzpun	The Hebrew for conscience.
Merciful	God is compassionate.
Messiah	Means 'Anointed One'. Jews are awaiting the arrival of the Messiah.
Messianic Age	The time which marks the arrival of the Messiah which will bring a new era of peace.
Nefesh	The Hebrew word, soul. It means 'breath'.
Olam Ha-ba	Means the 'world to come'. Also referred to as the Messianic Age.
Omnibenevolence	The state of being all-loving and infinitely good - a characteristic often attributed to God.
Omnipotence	The all-powerful, almighty and unlimited nature of God.
Omnipresent	God is present, everywhere at all times.
Omniscience	The all-knowing nature of God.
Onan	Immediate mourner.
Orthodox	A major branch within Judaism which adheres faithfully to the principles and practices of traditional Judaism. Orthodox Jews believe that the Law of the Torah is eternal and unchanging, and they practise observance of the Sabbath, religious festivals, holy days and the dietary laws.
Pesach	Also called Passover or the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Festival commemorating the Exodus from Egypt, celebrated in the Spring.
Reform	A major branch of Judaism which seeks to embrace a diversity of interpretations of Jewish Law and customs, whilst preserving the beliefs, values and traditions central to the faith. Reform Jews believe that Jewish law is inspired by God and people can choose which laws to follow.

Shema	A prayer declaring Jewish faith that is said by many Jews twice a day. The Shema states that there is only one God. It is placed in the Mezuzah case and tefillin.
Sheol	A dark and dusty place where some Jews used to believe that souls were cleansed and purified.
Shiva	Means ‘seven’ and is the seven days of mourning by the immediate family of a deceased person.
Shloshim	Means ‘thirty’ and is the first month of mourning following the funeral of a family member.
Taharah	Meaning ‘purification’ and is the ritual of washing and preparing the deceased for burial.
Tallit	Prayer shawl traditionally worn by Jewish men during morning prayer services, festivals and on the Sabbath.
Talmud	A collection of Jewish law and tradition; Mishnah and Gemara collected together. Stud of the Talmud is an important religious duty for Jewish men.
Tefillin	Small leather boxes containing passages from the Torah, strapped on the forehead and arm for weekday, morning prayers. This is observed by Orthodox Jewish men of bar mitzvah age and over.
Tenakh	The Jewish sacred text comprising of three sections; Torah, Nevi'im and Ketuvim.
Tikkun Olam	Repair the world.
Torah	The Word of God. The first five books of the Hebrew Bible.
Transcendent	God is above and beyond worldly things.
Western Wall	Also known as the ‘Wailing Wall’ or the ‘Kotel’. It is the last remaining wall of the Temple in Jerusalem.
Yad Vashem	Israel’s official memorial to the victims of the Holocaust.
Yarzheit	A special candle burnt for 24 hours on the anniversary of the death of a family member.
Yetzer Ha Tov	Good inclinations.
Yetzer Hara	Evil inclinations.

Sikhism

Term	Definition
Amritsar	Translated as 'pool of nectar', this is their place of pilgrimage where the pool surrounds the Harmandir Sahib.
Anadpur Sahib	The main site of significance in a city known as the 'holy city of bliss'. It is where the Panj Piaras, the first five initiated into the Khalsa, was formed.
Antam Sanskaar	Literally the 'final rites'. Referring to the funeral rites in Sikhism.
Antim Ardas	The final prayer recited as part of the funeral rites in Sikhism.
Atma	The name given to the non-physical part of us (soul) that is believed to be immortal.
Bhog Ceremony	The ceremony marking the end of the mourning period and the completion of the reading of the Guru Granth Sahib.
Cremation	To dispose of a dead person's body by burning it to ashes.
Dhan	Material service towards others or the faith.
Gurmukh	Someone who has become God-centred rather than self-centred (manmukh).
Guru	A religious or spiritual teacher and guide.
Guru Granth Sahib	The sacred scripture of Sikhism that is regarded as the revealed Word of God.
Hukam	The commanded will of God.
Ik Onkar	Is found at the beginning of the mool mantra and means 'there is only one God'.
Kaccha	One of the five Ks worn by a member of the Khalsa. These shorts remind them of the clothes worn by soldiers who fought for the faith. They also symbolise sexual restraint.
Kanga	One of the five Ks worn by a member of the Khalsa. This is the comb that reminds them that God is there to remove the tangles from their life and can always be turned to.
Kara	One of the five Ks worn by a member of the Khalsa. This is the bangle that reminds them that God is eternal.
Karma	The belief that actions, and the consequences of these actions, determine whether the atma will be released from the cycle of birth, death and rebirth. One could gain positive and/or negative karma.
Kesh	One of the five Ks worn by a member of the Khalsa. This is the uncut hair and beard, symbolising the rejection of pride and the appreciation of God's gift of creation.
Kirat Karo	One of the three pillars of Sikhism; to earn an honest living using physical and mental effort.
Kirpan	One of the five Ks worn by a member of the Khalsa. This is the dagger worn to symbolise defence against attack and the protection of those who are oppressed.

Langar	The free community kitchen found in all gurdwaras. This is a cornerstone of the Sikh religion, showing equality, and was founded by Guru Nanak.
Maan	Mental service towards others or the faith.
Mool Mantra	Means ‘basic teaching’ and these are the first statements of each section of the Guru Granth Sahib. These underpin the Sikh religion and are the basic beliefs about the nature of God.
Morality	Principles and standards determining which actions are right or wrong.
Mukti	Spiritual liberation from the cycle of birth, life death and rebirth.
Nirgun	The belief in Waheguru as ineffable; difficult to describe using words. Waheguru is without physical form.
Omnibenevolent	The quality of being perfect and possessing unlimited goodness (some might define as being all-loving).
Omnipotent	The quality of being all-powerful.
Omnipresent	The quality of being everywhere, at once.
Omniscient	The quality of being all-knowing.
Pilgrimage	A sacred journey to a place of religious significance.
Reincarnation	The belief that the soul will be reborn into a new body after death.
Sagun	The belief in Waheguru as manifest; taking physical form.
Samsara	The cycle of birth, death and reincarnation.
Seva	Service to fellow human beings; acts of kindness or charity.
Social Justice	Fairness in the distribution of, and access to, wealth and opportunities within society.
Taan	Physical service towards others or the fatih.
Transcendent	The quality of God existing apart from and beyond the limitations of the material universe.
Vice	An immoral or unacceptable characteristic or behaviour.
Virtue	Behaviours considered to be morally acceptable.
Waheguru	The term used to refer to God; the Supreme Being. Literally means ‘wonderful teacher’ or ‘wonderful Guru’.

Non-religious perspectives

Term	Definition
Absolutism	The belief that certain actions are always wrong, such as murder.
Agapè	Unconditional, unselfish love. This is the love that Christians are called to show to others.
Agnostic	Individuals who neither affirm nor deny the existence of God or gods, often believing that the existence of a divine being is unknowable or undecided.
Atheist	Atheists do not believe in the existence of any gods or divine beings. They often emphasise the importance of scientific inquiry and empirical evidence to understand the world. Atheists may reject religious beliefs as unsupported by reason or evidence, focusing instead on human experiences, values, and the material world.
Conscience	The word conscience comes from the Latin words ‘con’ meaning ‘with’ and ‘scientia’ meaning ‘knowledge’. Christians believe that conscience is a God-given ability to know the difference between right and wrong, and part of being created Imago Dei.
Consequentialism	The belief that the consequences of any action must be taken into account before making any moral decisions.
Eternal	Everlasting or without end.
Eulogy	A speech or written tribute delivered in honour of someone who has died.
Forgiveness	The act of letting go of resentment, anger, or the desire for revenge toward someone who has wronged you, even if they do not apologise or deserve it.
Free will	The ability to make choices independently, freely and without coercion.
Funeral	The way in which a deceased person is celebrated and remembered at the end of their life. This is usually a ceremony or service.
Humanist	Humanists do not believe in any gods or divine beings. They often emphasise the value of human beings and seek to promote human flourishing through reason, science and ethical principles. Humanists typically believe that meaning, purpose, and morality are derived from human experience and the development of society rather than religious sources. They advocate for compassion, justice and the well-being of others, often placing emphasis on individual responsibility and the betterment of humanity.

Inconsistent Triad	JL Mackie identified the ‘inconsistent triad’, where he suggested that the following three (triad) things are inconsistent as they cannot all be true at the same time: if God is omnipotent (all-powerful) and omnibenevolent (all-loving), then evil would not exist. However, we have experienced evil and know that it exists. Therefore, either God is not all-powerful because he cannot stop suffering, or he is not all-loving because he doesn’t want to stop suffering. This dilemma is called the Problem of Evil.
Moral Evil	Suffering caused by the actions of humans.
Mourning	A time of grieving caused by the death of a loved one.
Natural Evil	Suffering caused by natural events.
Relativism	The belief that the humans must base their decisions on a situation-by-situation basis and always take into account the situation in which an act is performed.