

A-Level Preparation into the Sixth Form 2023

Religious Studies

We follow the Edexcel Religious Studies A' Level syllabus. The course consists of three main components; Philosophy of Religion, Ethics and New Testament studies. Over the summer there are a number of things that you should do to prepare yourself for starting the course in September. On the school website you will find a downloadable pack from Edexcel with some preparation work on some of the Philosophy and Ethics topics. We suggest you choose two from the first four topics to research and make some notes on.

Below are also some suggestions of additional reading and research that you could do.

Background reading: There is lots of choose from when preparing to study Philosophy and Ethics. One of the books below would provide some background understanding and awareness of some of the key ideas and scholars that you will encounter. The starred books are those that will give useful extension reading when you are writing essays

- *'A Little History of Philosophy'* by Nigel Warburton *
- *'Sophie's World'* by Jostein Gaarder
- *'God Matters'* by Peter Vardy and Charlotte Vardy *
- *'Ethics Matters'* by Peter Vardy and Charlotte Vardy *
- *'Justice'* by Michael Sandel
- *'Simply Jesus'* by Tom Wright

Additional online activities: Have a look at the popular online series of lectures by Harvard political philosopher Michael Sandel. The series is called **'Justice'** and it explores key questions and issues in moral philosophy. Choose some that interest you and watch his lectures. Episode 1 explores the well-known 'trolley problem' that you may have heard of and which you will encounter in your first few ethics lessons.

Try some philosophy experiments on <https://www.philosophyexperiments.com/>. These take you through some common problems and questions in philosophy. They each pose different scenarios and require you to submit your responses to them. The first one on the list 'Should you kill the fat man?' links to the trolley problem discussed by Michael Sandel in his first lecture.

Keep up to date with the news. Many of the issues that we discuss link to current issues and debates, so keep an eye on the news as this will give you a wealth of examples that you can use. For example, issues related to the environment, sex and relationships, medical ethics, war, as well as to philosophical questions such as the problem of evil and suffering in the world.

Course Textbooks: We use the Pearson Edexcel Student Guides. We can provide copies, though students often find it useful to purchase a copy so that they can add their own notes, highlights and annotations as they work through each topic.

