

NOTRE DAME SENIOR SCHOOL THEOLOGY POLICY

NOTRE
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SCHOOL



Notre Dame Senior School Theology Policy

Mission Statement

In the spirit of Saint Jeanne de Lestonnac, our foundress:

'We are all educators..... Accompanying young people in their efforts to build their lives for today and tomorrow.'

These words embody our mission. Notre Dame is a Roman Catholic Independent School with a strong ecumenical tradition, respecting the faiths and cultures of all members of our community. Our mission is built on a 400 year tradition, strengthened by the presence of the Sisters of the Company of Mary Our Lady.

We believe that fulfilment comes through the recognition and nurturing of individual potential in all areas of endeavour.

We aim to fulfil our Mission Statement by:

- emphasising personal, moral and spiritual development, based on Gospel values, enabling each member to become a valued participant in the life of the community
- striving for personal academic excellence, offering learning experiences which will challenge each person
- providing wide-ranging opportunities, seeking to identify and develop talents in artistic, cultural and sporting pursuits
- fostering a strong relationship between family and school
- In this way we seek to prepare young women for their role as responsible citizens of the wider world following in the footsteps of Jesus Christ.

Vision for Theology at Notre Dame

Theology is a core subject in the curriculum at Notre Dame Senior school. Placing Theology at the core of our curriculum helps the school to fulfil its mission to educate the whole person in preparing young women to fulfil their roles as responsible citizens of the wider world based on the gospel values.

The study of Theology here at Notre Dame provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. Theology offers opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development. It enhances students' awareness and understanding of religions and beliefs, teachings, practices and forms of expression, as well as of the influence of religion on individuals, families, communities and cultures.

It is our intent through our Theology curriculum to engage, inspire and challenge our students, by raising awareness of the Catholic faith and traditions as well as of other faith communities in order to respect and understand them. Through studying Theology, students will learn how to critically evaluate a range of topics and issues, develop skills in considering evidence and structuring an argument. It is our aim to ensure students receive stimulating and engaging Theology lessons.

Aims of Theology

The objectives of our Theology curriculum at Notre Dame Senior School are:

- To encourage students to develop an understanding of what it means to believe in God and of the impact that belief in God has on people's lives.
- To develop an understanding of Catholic beliefs and teachings, traditions and practice, as well as of other faith traditions.
- To encourage study, investigation and reflection by the students.
- To develop the following skills:
 - ✓ Ability to listen;
 - ✓ To think critically, spiritually, ethically and theologically;
 - ✓ The ability to make informed judgements.
- To foster the following attitudes:
 - ✓ Respect for truth;
 - ✓ Respect for self;
 - ✓ Respect for others;
 - ✓ Awareness of the spiritual;
 - ✓ Moral responsibility;
 - ✓ The challenge of living in a multicultural, multi-faith society.
- To develop an awareness and understanding of human dignity - that each individual is unique and valuable.

The outcomes of Theology are religiously literate young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills - appropriate to their age and capacity - to think spiritually, ethically and theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.

Content of the Theology Curriculum

Theology is taught to all students in KS3 and KS4, and core RE is taught at KS5 as part of the school's PILLARS programme. In KS5 students have the opportunity to choose to study an A Level in Philosophy, Religion and Ethics.

The content for Theology is provided in the Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools which is itself based on the Constitutions of the Second Vatican Council and the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

KS3

KS3 has a new Religious Education Directory launched by the CES for Catholic schools. Titled '**To Know You More Clearly**' the directory sets out the purpose of Theology for KS3 and features a programme of study with a model curriculum, which presents the expected outcomes in six curriculum branches. The model curriculum is rooted in the narrative of salvation history.

<https://catholiceducation.org.uk/schools/religious-education/item/1000034-religious-educationcurriculum-directory>

Six Curriculum Branches
Creation and Covenant
Prophecy and Promise
Galilee to Jerusalem
Desert to Garden
To the Ends of the Earth
Dialogue and Encounter

Homework is set weekly at KS3 and takes the form of knowledge and understanding questions, extended essays, reflections and creative writing tasks. Homework projects are also sometimes set and is based on the topic being studied and also gives students the opportunity to explore a topic beyond the realms of Christianity.

KS4

Students follow the AQA Spec A GCSE Catholic Christianity syllabus comprising of two papers:

- o Paper 1 – Catholic Christian Beliefs and teachings, and practices; Islam Beliefs and teachings and Islamic Practices
- o Paper 2 – Themes: Relationships and families, Religion and Life, Existence of God and Revelation, and Religion Peace & Conflict.

Homework at KS4 is set each week and takes the form of weekly exam questions that extend and consolidate the work completed in class. Students are also expected to learn a set number of key words on a weekly basis to extend their subject vocabulary and religious literacy skills.

KS5

A Level students studying Philosophy, Religion and Ethics follow the AQA Spec comprising of two papers:

- o Paper 1 – Philosophy of Religion and Ethics

o Paper 2 – Christianity and Dialogues

Students are assessed internally throughout the year and at the end of year 12. At the end of year 13, students sit two three-hour exams.

Homework is set each week and usually takes the form of essay questions based on past exam type questions. Students are also expected to deepen their knowledge through independent study and show evidence of wider reading in their written work.

Assessment

Formal Assessment

In Theology, students are formally assessed at the end of each unit of work by way of an examination on the work studied for that unit. When teachers feedback the grades /results, they should also give constructive feedback to students on what went well (www) and what they need to do to improve (ebi). Teacher feedback of grades and targets for improvement are confidential to individual students and teachers should not share grades/results or targets for improvement with the class.

Each student is given a MidYIS, Yellis and ALIS predicted (target) grade by which they should measure their progress in their performance and assessed pieces of work. Students should compare their grades / results from assessments to their predicted (target) grade to individually assess their own performance. Students should note any corrections they should make and the questions they did not do so well on. Students should then green pen any corrections they need to make in their assessed work, and also write a target for improvement they will focus on for future assessments.

It is strongly encouraged as good practice that teachers should give generic feedback on student performance on questions in going over end of unit assessments or exams. This is the opportunity for teachers to dedicate time to making corrections on poorly answered questions and revisit particular exam skills if needed.

As well as end of unit assessments, students are formally assessed in Theology at other times – as follow:

- End of the year examinations in June
- Year 11 mock examinations in December and mini- mock examinations in March
- Year 12 and 13 assessment weeks in November, February and mock examinations in March

Informal Assessments

Students will be set homework every week and their work will be marked by teachers every two weeks. Much of the homework tasks set (at least for KS3 students) are informal tasks and therefore will not be graded but will be given written feedback based on the www/ebi model. Students will be expected to make corrections to their work in green pen when homework is given back. Teachers should devote some time (probable around 5 minutes) in the lesson for students to make their green pen corrections.

Students in KS4 and KS5 will have homework that is assessed using GCSE and A Level grades accompanied with feedback.

Student peer-assessment also forms part of the informal assessment.

Grading and Marking

The grading system for measuring attainment and progress in Theology works on the following basis:

KS3

In Years 7 – 9 the students are given grades 1 – 5 based on the new GCSE grading structure of assessment in accordance with the whole school policy on assessment.

Year 7 Theology Levels of Attainment

Attainment Target 1: Learning about Religion		Attainment Target 2: Learning from Religion	
Level	I can...	Level	I can...
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use religious words to clearly describe sources, beliefs, practices (what they do) and experiences describe similarities and differences between and with religions clearly describe how religion affects a persons life explain why people express (show) their religion in certain ways 	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ask and suggest answers to questions about life and religion (ultimate questions, e.g. Why are we here? Where are we going? What is right and wrong? Is there life after death? etc.) identify how these questions and answers affect my own life and the lives of others describe what inspires/influences myself and others
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use a variety of religious words to explain how religious beliefs affect a person and a community describe why people belong to religions evaluate reasons for differences and similarities within and between religions explain how religious sources are used to provide answers to ultimate questions and ethical issues recognise differences in forms of expression within and between religions 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ask and suggest answers to questions about life and religion and explain how this affects my own life and the life of others explain what inspires and influences themselves and others and what may make it hard to belong to a religion
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use good religious vocabulary to fully describe different religions and their beliefs explain the reasons for differences within and between religions explain why the impact of religion can vary interpret sources and explain why they are used differently by different people 	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use arguments and examples to explain the links between beliefs, teachings and world issues. show an understanding of different views on ultimate and religious questions consider the challenges of belonging to a religion in the modern world, how it may be hard to hold certain values and commitments

	<p>to provide answers to ultimate questions and ethical issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> explain the importance of different forms of expression 		
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Year 8 Theology Levels of Attainment

Attainment Target 1: Learning about Religion		Attainment Target 2: Learning from Religion	
Level	I can...	Level	I can...
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use religious words to clearly describe sources, beliefs, practices (what they do) and experiences describe similarities and differences between and with religions clearly describe how religion affects a persons life explain why people express (show) their religion in certain ways 	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ask and suggest answers to questions about life and religion (ultimate questions, e.g. Why are we here? Where are we going? What is right and wrong? Is there life after death? etc.) identify how these questions and answers affect my own life and the lives of others describe what inspires/influences myself and others
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use a variety of religious words to explain how religious beliefs affect a person and a community describe why people belong to religions evaluate reasons for differences and similarities within and between religions explain how religious sources are used to provide answers to ultimate questions and ethical issues recognise differences in forms of expression within and between religions 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ask and suggest answers to questions about life and religion and explain how this affects my own life and the life of others explain what inspires and influences themselves and others and what may make it hard to belong to a religion
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use good religious vocabulary to fully describe different religions and their beliefs explain the reasons for differences within and between religions explain why the impact of religion can vary interpret sources and explain why they are used differently by different people to provide answers to ultimate questions and ethical issues explain the importance of different forms of expression 	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use arguments and examples to explain the links between beliefs, teachings and world issues. show an understanding of different views on ultimate and religious questions consider the challenges of belonging to a religion in the modern world, how it may be hard to hold certain values and commitments
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use large religious vocabulary to show a good understanding of a range of religions and beliefs analyse issues and questions of meaning and truth 	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> clearly explain personal and critical responses to ultimate and religious questions and ethical issues using evidence and example, evaluate the importance of religious and other

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain the influence of history and culture on religious life • explain why the affect of belonging to a faith is not the same for all people • use different sources, evidence and forms of expression to respond critically to religion, spirituality and ethics 	views for understanding human relationships and ultimate questions
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Year 9 Theology Levels of Attainment

Attainment Target 1: Learning about Religion		Attainment Target 2: Learning from Religion	
Level	I can...	Level	I can...
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use religious words to clearly describe sources, beliefs, practices (what they do) and experiences • describe similarities and differences between and with religions • clearly describe how religion affects a persons life • explain why people express (show) their religion in certain ways 	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ask and suggest answers to questions about life and religion (ultimate questions, e.g. Why are we here? Where are we going? What is right and wrong? Is there life after death? etc.) • identify how these questions and answers affect my own life and the lives of others • describe what inspires/influences myself and others
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use a variety of religious words to explain how religious beliefs affect a person and a community • describe why people belong to religions • evaluate reasons for differences and similarities within and between religions • explain how religious sources are used to provide answers to ultimate questions and ethical issues • recognise differences in forms of expression within and between religions 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ask and suggest answers to questions about life and religion and explain how this affects my own life and the life of others • explain what inspires and influences themselves and others and what may make it hard to belong to a religion
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use good religious vocabulary to fully describe different religions and their beliefs • explain the reasons for differences within and between religions • explain why the impact of religion can vary • interpret sources and explain why they are used differently by different people to provide answers to ultimate questions and ethical issues • explain the importance of different forms of expression 	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use arguments and examples to explain the links between beliefs, teachings and world issues. • show an understanding of different views on ultimate and religious questions • consider the challenges of belonging to a religion in the modern world, how it may be hard to hold certain values and commitments

4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use large religious vocabulary to show a good understanding of a range of religions and beliefs • analyse issues and questions of meaning and truth • explain the influence of history and culture on religious life • explain why the affect of belonging to a faith is not the same for all people • use different sources, evidence and forms of expression to respond critically to religion, spirituality and ethics 	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clearly explain personal and critical responses to ultimate and religious questions and ethical issues • using evidence and example, evaluate the importance of religious and other views for understanding human relationships and ultimate questions
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use extensive religious vocabulary to analyse a range of religions and beliefs • understand interpretations of religion with reference to historical, cultural, social and philosophical affects • critically evaluate the impact of religions and beliefs on different communities and societies • analyse different interpretations of sources, using some of the key methods by which religion and ethics are studied • interpret and evaluate a variety of forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression 	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly analyse a wide range of viewpoints on ultimate and religious questions. • organise evidence, arguments and examples to fully justify my own views and provide a detailed evaluation of the perspectives of others

KS4

In Years 10 and 11 the students are given grades 9 - 1 based on the new GCSE grading structure. The grade descriptors are shared with the students and are used regularly in GCSE Theology lessons when students are peer assessing and learning about exam skills.

KS5

In Years 12 and 13 the students are given AS and A-level grades for work that is assessed. Again the grade descriptors are shared with the students and are used regularly in Yr.12 / 13 Theology lessons when students are peer assessing and learning about exam skills.

Recording Assessed Grades

Assessed grades and percentages should be recorded in teachers' mark books which should be accurate and up to date. The teacher should record the nature of the work, date it was completed and assessment level. Mark books should be made available on request to Head of Theology or Senior Management.

Theology department formal assessments are recorded across a whole year group. These are recorded centrally in the department progress spreadsheets at the end of each unit of work. These will usually be in the form of assignments, timed tests or examinations.

At the beginning of the year, each student is given a MidYIS, Yellis and ALIS predicted (target) grade by which they should measure their progress in their performance and assessed pieces of work. Teachers should record all formal assessed grades / results against students predicted (target) grades in their planner. Please note these student predicted (target) grades are confidential to individual students and must not be shared with whole classes.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy is monitored by the Head of Theology and is evaluated and reviewed by the Lestonnac Committee every two years.