

# HIGHDOWN SCHOOL & SIXTH FORM CENTRE

## Frequently Asked Questions



## ETHICS & CITIZENSHIP DEPARTMENT

### **Why Ethics and Citizenship?**

*We study Religious Education in years 7-9. In Year 10 and 11 your son / daughter will have the opportunity to choose between a GCSE in Religious Studies or Citizenship. At Sixth form we offer A Level Philosophy / Ethics.*

### **What topics do you cover?**

*In Year 7 we cover a wide variety of religious and ethical topics, starting with the existence of God. We will look at religious beliefs in year 7, including Christianity and Islam, as well as covering some thematic materials such as symbolism in a number of different religious traditions. We continue with linking symbolism and meaning in governance and broader governmental systems, and finish with comparative religious responses of ethical challenges.*

### **Do I have to be religious?**

*No. The aim of our lessons is to learn about people with a wide variety of religious beliefs, and those who have none. It doesn't matter if you are religious, an atheist or an agnostic. You just need to bring an open mind and a willingness to learn.*

### **Do you set your classes?**

*Students start Y7 in mixed ability groups for the first term before moving to three sets for the remainder of Years 7-11 linked to other subjects.*

### **Home-learning, Marking and Assessment**

*In line with school policy, students receive written feedback on their work in the form of regular marking and end of unit tests. We make use of GCSE style extended writing questions in order to prepare students for longer examination questions. In addition, there is a programme of self-assessed home learning as an integral part of every unit that we cover.*

### **How many students do you have in each class?**

*At KS3, class sizes average around 29 students. At KS4 we try to maintain smaller class sizes for groups of students who need the most support. For these groups, class sizes are around 20 students per class.*

### **How do you challenge your most able students?**

*Ethics is a subject that lends itself to a wide variety of discussion and evaluation topics. Every lesson includes different levels of challenge and we encourage students to stretch themselves by choosing tasks that maximize their use of evaluative skills.*

### **How do you support students?**

*Our differentiated tasks in each lesson offer more scaffolded and supported tasks should students require them. Our staff know their students well and provide support in class for students as and*

*when they need it. We check constantly if students are understanding the work and tailor our teaching to fit the needs of the learners.*

**Which Textbooks do you use?**

*We are not currently using textbooks in Key Stage Three lessons. At GCSE for Religious Studies and Citizenship students have access to an online course textbook for work at home, and review books for certain lessons.*

**Which exam boards do you use?**

*We currently use AQA as the exam board for GCSE Religious Studies and EDUQAS as the exam board for A level Philosophy. We are using OCR for GCSE Citizenship.*