

# Lincolnshire Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education

## KS3 Additional Unit: Philosophy and Religion – What is a ‘good’ life?



By [Gillian Georgiou](#), Diocesan RE Adviser

### The questions we might ask:

- What does the term ‘good’ mean?
- How do different religious and non-religious traditions define ‘goodness’?
- What sources of authority provide religious and non-religious people with guidance on how to live a ‘good’ life?

### The ideas we might explore

- Recognise that the word ‘good’ means different things to different people: is a tsunami that floods a village a ‘good’ tsunami? A cancer cell that proliferates a ‘good’ cancer cell? What does ‘good’ look like in your school? At home? Amongst your friends? In the different religions you have studied?
- Think about how understanding what ‘bad’ is might help us understand what ‘good’ is (the *via negativa* – understanding what something is by thinking about what it is not)
- Examples of explanations of what good is in a number of religions and non-religious worldviews:  
**Christianity:** the ‘Golden Rule’ (**Mark 12:30-31**) – ‘love God and love your neighbour as yourself’, the Sermon on the Mount (**Matthew 5:1-12**), a range of parables to exemplify how to act towards others, e.g. the Good Samaritan, the Lost Sheep; ways in which Christians live this out, e.g. foodbanks, street pastors, links with global Christian communities or other Christian denominations, the ways in which beliefs affect daily living, e.g. choosing which food to buy (fairtrade or not?), how to travel on holiday (environmental impact?), etc.  
**Islam:** Hadith (teachings/sayings/advise given by the Prophet Muhammad) – “None of you truly believes unless he loves for his brother what he loves for himself” (**Hadith Nawawi 13**); the importance of good character/behaviour (*akhlaq*), e.g. **Qur’an 33.21, 33.21**; the importance of charity (*zakat*), e.g. **Quran 2.215, 2.274**; the importance of looking after the environment, e.g. **Quran 2. 60, 6.38, 6.99**; ways in which beliefs affect daily living, e.g. giving in charity, engaging with the wider local community through events such as #VisitMyMosque, etc.  
**Humanism:** key principles – trusting scientific method, rejecting the idea of the supernatural, making ethical decisions on basis of reason, empathy and a concern for human beings and sentient animals, belief that in the absence of an afterlife and any overarching purpose in the universe, humans can act to give their life meaning by seeking happiness in this life and helping others to do the same; see here for further teaching materials:  
<https://understandinghumanism.org.uk/uhtheme/ethics/>