Topic Overview: Introduction to the Dharmic Faiths

KS3	Year 8
Disciplinary Focus:	Human and Social Sciences
Religion Focus:	Hinduism and Buddhism
Religion to Encounter:	Sikhism and Jainism
Core Question:	What are the Dharmic faiths?
Component Questions:	What are the key aspects – historical, geographical, spiritual – which link the dharmic religions? What are the historical roots of Hinduism and what are its key beliefs, especially about God and about samsara? What are the historical roots of Buddhism, what do Buddhists believe about the Buddha, and what are Buddhism's key beliefs, especially about suffering and enlightenment? What are the historical roots of Sikhism and what are its key beliefs, especially about God and about how to live their lives?
Core substantive knowledge:	What the dharmic faiths are and why Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism and Jainism are categorised as such. The [historical] development of Hinduism. Brahman and the different representations of God in Hinduism. Hindu beliefs about samsara, karma and moksha. The historical roots of Buddhism: the life, enlightenment and teachings of the Buddha. Buddhist beliefs, especially the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path. The historical roots of Sikhism and its struggles against persecution. Sikh beliefs - about the qualities of Waheguru; about samsara and karma; and about the three foundations of Sikhism.