

Bracknell Forest Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education

On behalf of the Bracknell Forest Agreed Syllabus Conference it gives me great pleasure to introduce this new and much improved Locally Agreed Syllabus. The new syllabus is very heavily based upon the Non-statutory National Framework for Religious Education published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and the Department for Education and Skills in October 2004. Also noteworthy is the fact that all the Berkshire Agreed Syllabus Conferences agreed to work together in creating the core document, whilst each Unitary Authority's version has been careful to take into account local variations in the faith profile of its residents.

The new syllabus has had substantial input from RE teachers of all the foundation and key stages from schools throughout Berkshire, as well as representatives of all the major faiths. It has been written, designed and printed in a thematic way to make its use in schools much easier. I commend it to you and encourage you in implementing the syllabus to make use of the Bracknell Forest Religious Education Artefacts and Resources Service and the Bracknell Forest Directory of Contacts for Religions and Places of Worship.

I and my colleagues wish you every success in your work of teaching this important subject.

GORDON ANDERSON

**Chairman of Bracknell Forest Agreed Syllabus Conference
and Bracknell Forest SACRE**

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Our new syllabus begins by drawing attention to the importance of Religious Education in today's world. It provides a route to the knowledge and understanding that all children and young people need if they are to make a success of their lives in our ever-changing communities. It encourages reflection and promotes inquiry but, of course, it only goes so far. At some point each one must decide whether to continue through the gate and into the journey of faith. It is not our task to lead children or young people there, but to leave them in no doubt that there is more beyond what we cover here.



TONY ECCLESTON

Director of Education, Children's Services and Libraries

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Introduction

The importance of Religious Education

- RE provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.
- RE develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, other religious traditions and other world views that offer answers to questions such as these.
- RE enhances pupils' 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.
- RE offers opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development.
- RE encourages pupils to learn from different religions, beliefs, values and traditions while exploring their own beliefs and questions of meaning.
- RE challenges pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses.
- RE encourages pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging.
- RE enables pupils to flourish individually within their communities and as citizens in a pluralistic society and global community.
- RE has an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning.
- RE enables pupils to develop respect for and sensitivity to others, in particular those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own.
- RE promotes discernment and enables pupils to combat prejudice.

The aims of Religious Education

Religious Education should help pupils to:

Learn about religion by

- acquiring and developing knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other principal religions represented in Great Britain
- developing an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures.

Learn from religion by

- developing a positive attitude towards other people, respecting their right to hold different beliefs from their own and towards living in a society of diverse religions
- developing the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues with reference to the teachings of the principal religions represented in Great Britain
- enhancing their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by:
 - developing awareness of the fundamental questions of life raised by human experiences, and how religious teachings can relate to them
 - responding to such questions with reference to the teachings and practices of religions and to their understanding and experience
 - reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study.

Key aspects of learning in Religious Education

Learning about religion includes enquiry into, and investigation of, the nature of religion, its beliefs, teachings and ways of life, sources, practices and forms of expression. It includes the skills of interpretation, analysis and explanation.

Pupils learn to communicate their knowledge and understanding using specialist vocabulary. It also includes identifying and developing an understanding of ultimate questions and ethical issues. Learning about religion covers pupils' knowledge and understanding of individual religions and how they relate to each other as well as the study of the nature and characteristics of religion and its impact on the lives of believers.

Learning from religion is concerned with developing pupils' reflection on and response to their own and others' experiences in the light of their learning about religion. It develops pupils' skills of application, interpretation and evaluation of what they learn about religion.

Pupils learn to develop and communicate their own ideas, particularly in relation to questions of identity and belonging, purpose and truth, and values and commitments.

The contribution of Religious Education to the school curriculum

Supporting the values of the curriculum

Religious Education actively promotes the values of truth, justice, respect for all, and care of the environment. It places specific emphasis on:

- pupils valuing themselves and others
- the role of family and the community in religious belief and activity
- the celebration of diversity in society through understanding similarities and differences
- sustainable development of the Earth.

Religious Education also recognises the changing nature of society, including changes in religious practice and expression, and the influence of religion in the local, national and global community.

Supporting the aims of the curriculum

Aim 1:

The school curriculum should aim to provide opportunities for all pupils to learn and achieve.

Religious Education should be a stimulating, interesting and enjoyable subject. The knowledge, skills and understanding outlined in the national framework and adopted as part of this syllabus, are designed to promote the best possible progress and attainment for all pupils. Religious Education develops independent and interdependent learning. It makes an important contribution to pupils' skills in literacy and information and communication technology (ICT). Religious Education promotes an enquiring approach in which pupils carefully consider issues of beliefs and truth in religion. It also enhances the capacity to think coherently and consistently. This enables pupils to evaluate thoughtfully their own and others' views in a reasoned and informed manner.

Supporting the aims of the curriculum

Aim 2:

The school curriculum should aim to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development to prepare all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

Religious Education has a significant role in the promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. At the heart of this syllabus is a focus on ultimate questions and ethical issues. This focus enables pupils to appreciate their own and others' beliefs and cultures and how these impact on individuals, communities, societies and cultures. Religious Education seeks to develop pupils' awareness of themselves and others. This helps pupils to gain a clear understanding of the significance of religions and beliefs in the world today and learn about the ways different faith communities relate to each other.

This syllabus aims to promote religious understanding, discernment and respect and challenge prejudice and stereotyping. Religious Education is committed to exploring the significance of the environment, both locally and globally, and the role of human beings and other species within it. A central concern of Religious Education is the promotion of each pupil's self-worth. A sense of self-worth helps pupils to reflect on their uniqueness as human beings, share their feelings and emotions with others and appreciate the importance of forming and maintaining positive relationships.

Basis for an Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education

The agreed syllabus should satisfy two key requirements:

- the law (as set out in the Education Act 1996)
- the aims of Religious Education as defined by the local Agreed Syllabus Conference.

The Legal Requirement

The Education Act (1996) requires that:

- Religious Education should be taught to all pupils in full time education in schools except for those withdrawn at the request of their parents (details to be found in DFE Circular 1/94, paragraph 44).
- Religious Education in community schools and foundation schools not of a religious character, should be taught in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus recommended by the Agreed Syllabus Conference to the Local Authority. In schools with a religious foundation, the RE curriculum offered is to be determined by the governing body in accordance with the trust deed. The governing body may recommend that the school follows the Local Authority's agreed syllabus.
- As part of the curriculum, Religious Education should promote the 'spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils'.
- An agreed syllabus should 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain' (Education Act, 1996)
- The Education Act (1944) requires that an agreed syllabus 'shall not include any catechism or formulary which is distinctive of any particular religious denomination' (The Education Act 1944 section 26(2)). Circular 1/94 emphasises this point

and states that an agreed syllabus must not be designed to convert pupils, or to urge a particular religion or religious belief on pupils' (Circular 1/94 paragraph 32).

Status of Religious Education

This agreed syllabus supports guidance published by the DFE which states that '...RE has equal standing in relation to National Curriculum subjects...' (Circular 1/94, paragraph 20). It is the responsibility of the headteacher and the governing body to ensure that sufficient time and resources are given to Religious Education in schools to meet the statutory requirements (Circular 1/94, paragraph 19). It is important to note that the status of RE in Key Stage 4 and post 16 is not the same as most other subjects. Here, as well as in the other key stages, it is a compulsory subject for all pupils who have not been withdrawn by their parents.

Time for Religious Education

Reflecting the guidance of Circular 1/94 this agreed syllabus has been based on the expectation that the following hours be devoted to Religious Education:

- Key Stage 1: 36 hours per year
- Key Stage 2: 45 hours per year
- Key Stage 3: 45 hours per year
- Key Stage 4: 40 hours per year.

Withdrawal from Religious Education

The right of parents to withdraw their children from Religious Instruction on conscience grounds was included in the Education Act of 1944. All subsequent legislation has retained the clause that allows parents to withdraw their children from all or any part of Religious Education. It also protects teachers' right to withdraw from teaching the subject. Since 1944 the nature of RE has changed significantly from the nurture of children in a faith tradition to an open and educational enquiry. It is hoped that parents and teachers will feel comfortable with the nature and areas of learning found in this syllabus and that, as a consequence, few will feel the need to withdraw either their children or themselves from the subject. However, every school is required to publish

information about the right of withdrawal in its prospectus. (Further details can be found in Circular 1/94, paragraph 44.)

Attitudes in Religious Education

While knowledge, skills and understanding are central to this syllabus, it is also vital that Religious Education encourages pupils to develop positive attitudes to their learning and to the beliefs and values of others. The following four attitudes are essential for good learning in Religious Education and should be developed at each stage or phase of the subject:

Self-awareness in Religious Education includes pupils:

- feeling confident about their own beliefs and identity and sharing them without fear of embarrassment or ridicule
- developing a realistic and positive sense of their own religious, moral and spiritual ideas
- recognising their own uniqueness as human beings and affirming their self-worth
- becoming increasingly sensitive to the impact of their ideas and behaviour on other people.

Respect for all in Religious Education includes pupils:

- developing skills of listening and a willingness to learn from others, even when others' views are different from their own
- being ready to value difference and diversity for the common good
- appreciating that some beliefs are not inclusive and considering the issues that this raises for individuals and society
- being prepared to recognise and acknowledge their own bias
- being sensitive to the feelings and ideas of others.

Open-mindedness in Religious Education includes pupils:

- being willing to learn and gain new understanding
- engaging in argument or disagreeing reasonably and respectfully (without belittling or abusing others) about religious, moral and spiritual questions
- being willing to go beyond surface impressions
- distinguishing between opinions, viewpoints and beliefs in connection with issues of conviction and faith.

Appreciation and wonder in Religious Education includes pupils:

- developing their imagination and curiosity
- recognising that knowledge is bounded by mystery
- appreciating the sense of wonder at the world in which they live
- developing their capacity to respond to questions of meaning and purpose.

Learning across the curriculum: the contribution of Religious Education

Religious Education can promote learning across the curriculum in a number of areas such as spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, key skills and thinking skills

Spiritual development can be promoted through:

- discussing and reflecting on key questions of meaning and truth such as the origins of the universe, life after death, good and evil, beliefs about God and values such as justice, honesty and truth
- learning about and reflecting on important concepts, experiences and beliefs that are at the heart of religious and other traditions and practices
- considering how beliefs and concepts in religion may be expressed through the creative and expressive arts and related to the human and natural sciences, thereby contributing to personal and communal identity
- considering how religions and other world views perceive the value of human beings, and their relationships with one another, with the natural world, and with God
- valuing relationships and developing a sense of belonging
- developing their own views and ideas on religious and spiritual issues.

Moral development can be promoted through:

- enhancing the values identified within the National Curriculum, particularly valuing diversity and engaging in issues of truth, justice and trust
- exploring the influence of family, friends and media on moral choices and how society is influenced by beliefs, teachings, sacred texts and guidance from religious leaders

- considering what is of ultimate value to pupils and believers through studying the key beliefs and teachings from religion and philosophy about values and ethical codes of practice
- studying a range of ethical issues, including those that focus on justice, to promote racial and religious respect and personal integrity
- considering the importance of rights and responsibilities and developing a sense of conscience.

Social development can be promoted through:

- considering how religious and other beliefs lead to particular actions and concerns
- investigating social issues from religious perspectives, recognising the diversity of viewpoints within and between religions as well as the common ground between religions
- articulating pupils' own and others' ideas on a range of contemporary social issues.

Cultural development can be promoted through:

- encountering people, literature, the creative and expressive arts and resources from differing cultures
- considering the relationship between religion and cultures and how religions and beliefs contribute to cultural identity and practices
- promoting racial and interfaith harmony and respect for all, combating prejudice and discrimination, contributing positively to community cohesion and promoting awareness of how interfaith cooperation can support the pursuit of the common good.

Citizenship through Religious Education

Citizenship can be promoted through:

- developing pupils' knowledge and understanding about the diversity of national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom and the need for mutual respect and understanding

- enabling pupils to think about topical spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues including the importance of resolving conflict fairly
- exploring the rights, responsibilities and duties of citizens locally, nationally and globally
- enabling pupils to justify and defend orally, and in writing, personal opinions about issues, problems and events.

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) through Religious Education

PSHE can be promoted through pupils:

- developing confidence and responsibility and making the most of their abilities by learning about what is fair and unfair, right and wrong and being encouraged to share their opinions
- developing a healthy, safer lifestyle by learning about religious beliefs and teachings on drug use and misuse, food and drink, leisure, relationships and human sexuality, learning about the purpose and value of religious beliefs and sensitivities in relation to sex education and enabling pupils to consider and express their own views
- developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people by learning about the diversity of different ethnic and religious groups and the destructive power of prejudice, challenging racism, discrimination, offending behaviour and bullying, being able to talk about relationships and feelings, considering issues of marriage and family life and meeting and encountering people whose beliefs, views and lifestyles are different from their own.

Key skills through Religious Education

Pupils are able to develop the key skills of:

- **communication** through developing a broad and accurate religious vocabulary, reading and responding to a range of written and spoken language (including sacred texts, stories, poetry, prayer, liturgy and worship), communicating ideas using the creative and expressive arts, talking and writing with understanding and insight about

religious and other beliefs and values, reflecting critically on ultimate questions of life, using reasoned arguments

- **application of number** through calendrical reckoning, collecting, recording presenting and interpreting data involving graphs, charts and statistical analysis
- **information technology** through using CD-ROMs and the internet selectively, researching information about religions and beliefs, teaching and practices, using email to communicate and analyse information with people of differing beliefs and cultures, using spreadsheets and databases to handle and present data relevant to the study of Religious Education
- **working with others** through sharing ideas, discussing beliefs, values and practices, collaborating with each other and developing respect and sensitivity
- **improving own learning and performance** through setting targets as part of Religious Education development, reviewing their achievements and identifying ways to improve their own work
- **problem solving** through recognising key issues to do with religious belief, practice and expression, interpreting and explaining findings and making personal decisions on religious issues (for example, considering their own and religious ideas on good and evil), ethical dilemmas and priorities in life.

Other aspects of the curriculum through Religious Education

RE provides opportunities to promote:

- **thinking skills** through helping pupils to research, select, interpret and analyse information from religious traditions, reflect and question their own views and ideas and those of others and communicate their ideas in a variety of ways
- **financial capability** through considering the responsible use of money, the importance of

giving and the ethics of wealth, debt, poverty, gambling, business and investment

- **creativity and culture** through considering the scope of human nature, sources of inspiration and discovery, connections between beliefs, values and forms of artistic expression, appreciating the value of cultural distinctiveness and reflecting on beauty, goodness and truth in creative and expressive arts
- **education for racial equality and community cohesion** through studying the damaging effects of xenophobia and racial stereotyping, the impact of conflict in religion and the promotion of respect, understanding and cooperation through dialogue between people of different faiths and beliefs
- **effective contributions to scientific, medical and health issues** through exploring philosophical and ethical questions of the origin, purpose and destiny of the cosmos and life within it, exploring the nature of humanity and human interaction with the world, exploring developments in genetics and medicine and their application and use and exploring concepts of health and well-being and their promotion
- **links to employment, vocations and work-related learning** through a focus on individual sense of purpose and aspiration in life, and through considering the appropriateness and relevance of Religious Education to a wide range of employment opportunities and the development of spiritual and ethical issues linked to the world of work
- **education for sustainable development** through helping pupils consider the origins and value of life, the importance of looking after the environment and studying the ways in which religious beliefs and teachings have influenced attitudes to the environment and other species.

Religious Education and the general teaching requirements

What follows is an outline of the particular contribution Religious Education can make to the general teaching requirements of the National Curriculum.

Religious Education and inclusion

RE can make a significant contribution to inclusion, particularly in its focus on promoting respect for all. It has a role in challenging stereotypical views and appreciating, positively, differences in others. It enables pupils to consider the impact of people's beliefs on their own actions and lifestyle. It can also help to develop pupils' self-esteem.

Effective inclusion involves teaching a lively, stimulating Religious Education curriculum that:

- builds on and is enriched by the differing experiences pupils bring to Religious Education
- meets all pupils' learning needs including those with learning difficulties or who are gifted and talented, boys and girls, pupils for whom English is an additional language, pupils from all religious communities and pupils from a wide range of ethnic groups and diverse family backgrounds.

To overcome any potential barriers to learning in Religious Education, some pupils may require:

- support to access text, such as through prepared tapes, particularly when working with significant quantities of written materials or at speed
- help to communicate their ideas through methods other than extended writing, where this is a requirement. For example, pupils may demonstrate their understanding through speech or the use of ICT
- a non-visual way of accessing sources of information when undertaking research in aspects of Religious Education, for example using audio materials.

Religious Education and the use of language

RE can make an important contribution to pupils' use of language by enabling them to:

- acquire and develop a specialist vocabulary
- communicate their ideas with depth and precision
- listen to the views and ideas of others, including people from religious traditions
- be enthused about the power and beauty of language, recognising its limitations
- develop their speaking and listening skills when considering religions, beliefs and ideas and articulating their responses
- read, particularly from sacred texts
- write in different styles, such as poetry, diaries, extended writing and the synthesis of differing view, beliefs and ideas
- evaluate clearly and rationally, using a range of reasoned, balanced arguments.

Religious Education and the use of information and communication technology (ICT)

Religious Education can make an important contribution to pupils' use of ICT by enabling pupils to:

- make appropriate use of the internet or CD-ROM sources to investigate, analyse and evaluate different aspects of religious beliefs and practices, ultimate questions and ethical issues
- use email or videoconferencing to communicate and collaborate with individuals in different locations, enabling associations to be made between religions and individual, national and international life
- use multimedia and presentation software to communicate a personal response, the essence of an argument or a stimulus for discussion
- use writing-support and concept-mapping software to organise thoughts and communicate knowledge

and understanding of the diversity of belief and practice within and between religious traditions

- use equipment such as digital cameras and digital video to bring authentic images into the classroom to support discussion and reflection, and to enhance understanding of the impact of religious beliefs and practices on the lives of local individuals and faith communities.

Planning and assessment of Religious Education

The planning, teaching, learning and assessment of RE should be informed by the eight level scale of attainment descriptors published in this syllabus, taken from 'The non-statutory national framework for Religious Education' published by QCA in 2004. The inclusion of these attainment descriptions in this syllabus means they are the criteria schools are required to use in assessing pupils' attainment and progress in Religious Education.

The eight level scale of descriptors is structured around the two key aspects of learning: 'learning about religion' and 'learning from religion'. Each key aspect can be seen to have three strands:

Learning about religion:

- Beliefs, teachings and sources
(what people believe)
- Practices and ways of life
(what people do)
- Forms of expression.
(how people express themselves)

Learning from religion:

- Identity and belonging
(making sense of who we are)
- Meaning, purpose and truth
(making sense of life)
- Values and commitments.
(making sense of right and wrong)

The scale is made up of eight level descriptions of increasing difficulty, plus a description of exceptional performance. Each level description describes the types and range of performance that pupils working at a particular level should characteristically demonstrate. The level descriptions can provide the basis for making judgements about pupils' performance at the end of Key Stages 1, 2 and 3. At Key Stage 4 schools will use the GCSE criteria for assessment of attainment.

In deciding on a pupil's level of attainment at the end of a key stage, teachers should judge which description best fits the pupil's performance. When doing so, each description should be considered alongside the descriptions for adjacent levels. Although teachers should have an understanding of the levels at which their pupils are working, it is up to the schools to decide how and whether this information will be reported to parents.

It is expected that the majority of pupils will work within the following range of levels:

Key Stage 1: levels 1-3

Key Stage 2: levels 2-5

Key Stage 3: levels 3-8.

The expected attainment of the majority of pupils is as follows:

At age 7: level 2 and above

At age 11: level 4 and above

At age 14: level 5 and above.

Using the scale

The scale has three purposes:

1 To help in Assessment for Learning

Assessment for learning is an essential part of the everyday teaching and learning in RE. It involves 'gathering and interpreting evidence about pupils' learning and learners and their teachers using that evidence to decide where pupils are in their learning, where they are going and how to take the next steps.' (QCA and the Assessment Reform Group, 2001)

This means teachers will need to use the scale to:

- set appropriate learning objectives that challenge pupils to aim for higher levels of attainment
- set lesson objectives that reflect the knowledge and understanding, skills, attitudes and values in RE
- structure learning in achievable steps and support learning to enable pupils to make progress

- share lesson objectives with pupils to help them recognise the standards for which they are aiming
- provide constructive and positive feedback which identifies what pupils have done well and clear guidance on what their next steps should be
- identify pupils' current attainment and use it as a basis for development
- involve pupils in peer and self assessment, reviewing and reflecting on their work and teacher feedback.

2 To help in Assessment of Learning

Summative assessment opportunities should be built in periodically to enable teachers to make judgements of pupils' attainments against the level descriptions. They should contribute to assessment for learning.

A good summative assessment:

- makes assessment criteria clear and accessible to pupils
- uses a variety of styles of learning and outcomes
- requires pupils to reflect on their work against the assessment criteria
- takes account of both key aspects of Religious Education: *learning about religion* and *learning from religion*
- provides specific feedback showing how improvements can be made.

3 To help teachers report on attainment

Good assessment for and of learning will provide teachers with ample evidence on which to base best-fit judgements of pupils' attainment. Information outlined in the level descriptions will be helpful in summarising these judgements. It is up to schools to decide whether they include the levels achieved by pupils in reports to parents. Schools must, however, report annually to parents about the **progress** made by pupils in RE. This will necessitate effective record keeping.

Attainment targets for Religious Education

Level 1 : Learning about religion

Pupils use some religious words and phrases to recognise and name features of religious life and practice. They can recall religious stories and recognise symbols, and other verbal and visual forms of religious expression.

Level 1 : Learning from religion

Pupils talk about their own experiences and feelings, what they find interesting or puzzling and what is of value and concern to themselves and to others

Level 2: Learning about religion

Pupils use religious words and phrases to identify some features of religion and its importance to some people. They begin to show awareness of similarities in religions. Pupils retell religious stories and suggest meanings for religious actions and symbols. They identify how religion is expressed in different ways.

Level 2: Learning from religion

Pupils ask, and respond sensitively to, questions about their own and others' experiences and feelings. They recognise that some questions cause people to wonder and are difficult to answer. In relation to matters of right and wrong, they recognise their own values and those of others.

Level 3: Learning about religion

Pupils use a developing religious vocabulary to describe some key features of religions, recognising similarities and differences. They make links between beliefs and sources, including religious stories and sacred texts. They begin to identify the impact religion has on believers' lives. They describe some forms of religious expression.

Level 3: Learning from religion

Pupils identify what influences them, making links between aspects of their own and others' experiences. They ask important questions about religion and beliefs, making links between their own and others' responses. They make links between values and commitments, and their own attitudes and behaviour.

Level 4: Learning about religion

Pupils use a developing religious vocabulary to describe and show understanding of sources, practices, beliefs, ideas, feelings and experiences. They make links between them, and describe some similarities and differences both within and between religions. They describe the impact of religion on people's lives. They suggest meanings for a range of forms of religious expression.

Level 4: Learning from religion

Pupils raise, and suggest answers to, questions of identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments. They apply their ideas to their own and other people's lives. They describe what inspires and influences themselves and others.

Level 5: Learning about religion

Pupils use an increasingly wide religious vocabulary to explain the impact of beliefs on individuals and communities. They describe why people belong to religions. They understand that similarities and differences illustrate distinctive beliefs within and between religions and suggest possible reasons for this. They explain how religious sources are used to provide answers to ultimate questions and ethical issues, recognising diversity in forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression, within and between religions.

Level 5: Learning from religion

Pupils ask, and suggest answers to, questions of identity, belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, values and commitments, relating them to their own and

others' lives. They explain what inspires and influences them, expressing their own and others' views on the challenges of belonging to a religion.

Level 6: Learning about religion

Pupils use religious and philosophical vocabulary to give informed accounts of religions and beliefs, explaining the reasons for diversity within and between them. They explain why the impact of religions and beliefs on individuals, communities and societies varies. They interpret sources and arguments, explaining the reasons that are used in different ways by different traditions to provide answers to ultimate questions and ethical issues. They interpret the significance of different forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression.

Level 6: Learning from religion

Pupils use reasoning and examples to express insights into the relationship between beliefs, teachings and world issues. They express insights into their own and others' views on questions of identity and belonging, meaning, purpose and truth. They consider the challenges of belonging to a religion in the contemporary world, focusing on values and commitments.

Level 7: Learning about religion

Pupils use a wide religious and philosophical vocabulary to show a coherent understanding of a range of religions and beliefs. They analyse issues, values and questions of meaning and truth. They account for the influence of history and culture on aspects of religious life and practice. They explain why the consequences of belonging to a faith are not the same for all people within the same religion or tradition. They use some of the principal methods by which religion, spirituality and ethics are studied, including the use of a variety of sources, evidence and forms of expression.

Level 7: Learning from religion

Pupils articulate personal and critical responses to questions of meaning, purpose and truth and ethical issues. They evaluate the significance of religious and other views for understanding questions of human relationships, belonging, identity, society, values and commitments, using appropriate evidence and examples.

Level 8: Learning about religion

Pupils use a comprehensive religious and philosophical vocabulary to analyse a range of religions and beliefs. They contextualise interpretations of religion with reference to historical, cultural, social and philosophical ideas. They critically evaluate the impact of religions and beliefs on differing communities and societies. They analyse differing interpretations of religious, spiritual and moral sources, using some of the principal methods by which religion, spirituality and ethics are studied. They interpret and evaluate varied forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression.

Level 8: Learning from religion

Pupils coherently analyse a wide range of viewpoints on questions of identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments. They synthesise a range of evidence, arguments, reflections and examples, fully justifying their own views and ideas and providing a detailed evaluation of the perspectives of others.

Exceptional Performance: Learning about religion

Pupils use a complex religious, moral and philosophical vocabulary to provide a consistent and detailed analysis of religions and beliefs. They evaluate in depth the importance of religious diversity in a pluralistic society. They clearly recognise the extent to which the impact of religion and beliefs on different communities and societies has changed over time. They provide a detailed analysis of how religious, spiritual and moral sources are interpreted in

different ways, evaluating the principal methods by which religion and spirituality are studied. They synthesise effectively their accounts of the varied forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression.

Exceptional Performance: Learning from religion

Pupils analyse in depth a wide range of perspectives on questions of identity and belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, and values and commitments. They give independent, well-informed and highly reasoned insights into their own and others' perspectives on religious and spiritual issues, providing well-substantiated and balanced conclusions.

Attainment targets for Religious Education in grid form:

	AT1 Learning about religions involves knowledge and understanding of:				AT2 Learning from religion involves response, evaluation and application of questions of:		
Level	Vocabulary	beliefs, teachings and sources (what people believe)	practices and ways of life (what people do)	forms of expression (how people express themselves)	identity and belonging (making sense of who we are)	meaning, purpose and truth (making sense of life)	values and commitments (making sense of right and wrong)
	Pupils	Pupils	Pupils	Pupils	Pupils	Pupils	Pupils
1	use some religious words and phrases to	recall religious stories	recognise and name features of religious life and practice	recognise symbols and other verbal and visual forms of religious expression	talk about their own experiences and feelings	talk about what they find interesting or puzzling	talk about what is of value and concern to themselves and to others
2	use religious words and phrases to	retell religious stories	identify some features of religion and its importance for some people. They begin to show awareness of similarities in religions	suggest meanings for religious actions and symbols. They identify how religion is expressed in different ways	ask, and respond sensitively to, questions about their own and others' experiences and feelings	recognise that some questions cause people to wonder and are difficult to answer	recognise their own values and those of others in relation to matters of right and wrong
3	use a developing religious vocabulary to	make links between beliefs and sources and begin to identify the impact religion has on believers' lives	describe some key features of religions recognising similarities and differences	describe some forms of religious expression; make links between beliefs and sources, including religious stories and sacred texts	identify what influences them, making links between aspects of their own and others' experiences	ask important questions about religion and beliefs, making links between their own and others' responses	make links between values and commitments and their own attitudes and behaviour
4	use a developing religious vocabulary to	describe and show understanding of sources, beliefs and ideas making links between them and practices, feelings and experiences; describe some similarities and differences within and between religions	describe and show understanding of practices, feelings and experiences and the impact of religion on people's lives; describe some similarities and differences both within and between religions	suggest meanings for a range of forms of religious expression	raise, and suggest answers to, questions of identity and belonging and apply their ideas to their own and other people's lives; describe what inspires and influences themselves and others	raise, and suggest answers to, questions of meaning, purpose and truth and apply their ideas to their own and other people's lives	raise, and suggest answers to, questions of values and commitments and apply their ideas to their own and other people's lives
5	use an increasingly wide religious vocabulary to	show they understand that similarities and differences illustrate distinctive beliefs within and between religions and suggest possible reasons for this	explain the impact of beliefs on individuals and communities, explain how religious sources are used to provide answers to ultimate questions and ethical issues, and describe why people belong to religions	recognise diversity in forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression, within and between religions	ask, and suggest answers to, questions of identity and belonging relating them to their own and others' lives; explain what inspires and influences them, expressing their own and others' views on the challenges of belonging to a religion	ask, and suggest answers to, questions of meaning, purpose and truth relating them to their own and others' lives	ask, and suggest answers to, questions about values and commitments relating them to their own and others' lives

	AT1 Learning about religions involves knowledge and understanding of:				AT2 Learning from religion involves response, evaluation and application of questions of:		
6	use religious and philosophical vocabulary to	give informed accounts of religions and beliefs, explaining the reasons for diversity within and between them	explain why the impact of religions and beliefs on individuals, communities and societies varies and interpret sources and arguments, explaining the reasons that are used in different ways by different traditions to provide answers to ultimate questions and ethical issues	interpret the significance of different forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression	use reasoning and examples to express insights into their own and others' views on questions of identity and belonging	use reasoning and examples to express insights into the relationship between beliefs, teachings and world issues as well as questions of meaning and purpose and truth	use reasoning and examples to consider the challenges of belonging to a religion in the contemporary world, focusing on values and commitments
7	use a wide religious and philosophical vocabulary to	show a coherent understanding of a range of religions and beliefs and analyse issues, values and questions of meaning and truth	account for the influence of history and culture on aspects of religious life and practice and explain why the consequences of belonging to a faith are not the same for all people within the same religion or tradition	use some of the principal methods by which religion, spirituality and ethics are studied , including the use of a variety of sources, evidence and forms of expression	articulate personal and critical responses to questions of human relationships, belonging, identity and society evaluating the significance of religious and other views for understanding them using appropriate evidence and examples	articulate personal and critical responses to questions of meaning, purpose and truth evaluating the significance of religious and other views for understanding them using appropriate evidence and examples	articulate personal and critical responses to questions of values, commitments and ethical issues evaluating the significance of religious and other views for understanding them using appropriate evidence and examples
8	use a comprehensive religious and philosophical vocabulary to	analyse a range of religions and beliefs and contextualise interpretations of religion with reference to historical, cultural, social and philosophical ideas	critically evaluate the impact of religions and beliefs on differing communities and societies	analyse differing interpretations of religious, spiritual and moral sources, using some of the principal methods by which religion, spirituality and ethics are studied, and interpret and evaluate varied forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression	coherently analyse a wide range of viewpoints on questions of identity and belonging, and synthesise a range of evidence, arguments, reflections and examples, fully justifying their own views and ideas and providing a detailed evaluation of the perspectives of others	coherently analyse a wide range of viewpoints on questions of meaning, purpose and truth, and synthesise a range of evidence, arguments, reflections and examples, fully justifying their own views and ideas and providing a detailed evaluation of the perspectives of others	coherently analyse a wide range of viewpoints on questions of values and commitments, and synthesise a range of evidence, arguments, reflections and examples, fully justifying their own views and ideas and providing a detailed evaluation of the perspectives of others
E p	use complex religious, moral and philosophical vocabulary to	provide a consistent and detailed analysis of religions and beliefs and recognise the extent to which the impact of religion and beliefs on different communities and societies has changed over time	evaluate in depth the importance of religious diversity in a pluralistic society and recognise the extent to which the impact of religion and beliefs on different communities and societies has changed over time	provide a detailed analysis of how religious, spiritual and moral sources are interpreted in different ways, evaluating the principal methods by which religion and spirituality are studied, and interpret and evaluate varied forms of religious, spiritual and moral expressions	analyse in depth a wide range of perspectives on questions of identity and belonging, and give independent, well-informed and highly reasoned insights into their own and others' perspectives on religious and spiritual issues, providing well-substantiated and balanced conclusions	analyse in depth a wide range of perspectives on questions of meaning, purpose and truth, and give independent, well-informed and highly reasoned insights into their own and others' perspectives on religious and spiritual issues, providing well-substantiated and balanced conclusions	analyse in depth a wide range of perspectives on questions of values and commitments, and give independent, well-informed and highly reasoned insights into their own and others' perspectives on religious and spiritual issues, providing well-substantiated and balanced conclusions

How to use the Key Stage sections of this syllabus

The next sections of the syllabus outline the requirements for Religious Education in each key stage. The structure of the syllabus draws very heavily on the Non-statutory National Framework for Religious Education published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) in 2004.

Foundation Stage

This section outlines the requirements for this stage and aspects of religions which should be explored, with examples provided from all six religious traditions included in this syllabus. Teachers should ensure they draw on the five aspects of religion but the examples are presented as suggestions only. There is no requirement to cover all the religions illustrated and other traditions may be included. Many of the content ideas are included in a table which illustrates how they might contribute to broader themes covered in this stage.

Key Stages 1-3

The Non-statutory National Framework for Religious Education suggests that all pupils should have been introduced to the six religions deemed to be the principal faiths found in Great Britain by the end of Key Stage 3, having explored Christianity, as one of these faiths, in each key stage. This is the principle on which the previous two locally agreed syllabi for Religious Education have been written. In line with existing practice, therefore, religions have been allocated to key stages as core areas of required study. Christianity is included as a core area of study in each key stage and each of the other five faiths is included once as a core area of study in Key Stages 1-3. Schools and teachers may choose to include study units on non-core religions, over and above the required minimum number of religions in each key stage. To facilitate such an initiative, approaches to each of the six religions is outlined for each key stage. The intention in providing this optional material is to ensure that pupils' engagement with religious traditions

is appropriate to the key stage in which they are working.

Areas of study are structured around questions based on themes suggested for each key stage in the Non-statutory National Framework for Religious Education. Coverage is summarised in diagrammatic form in each key stage section found in the following pages. Each diagram illustrates the required religions and theme related questions to be addressed within the key stage. In each section the summary diagram is followed by study units for each of the three main themes through core and optional religions. Teachers will need to ensure they cover each theme by addressing all the key questions detailed for a study of Christianity and some of the questions outlined for the other core religions (ie Judaism in KS1, Hinduism and Sikhism in KS2 and Buddhism and Islam in KS3). Where schools choose to extend each theme to include the study of non-core religions, either the UK's principal religions or other faiths or secular belief systems deemed to be of interest in particular situations (see appendix), teachers can select freely from questions provided about them. Some of these questions, and related content, should, however, form the basis of study for these additional religions.

Key Stage 4

All pupils are required to follow an externally accredited course of study for Religious Studies eg GCSE. Examinable courses which include elements of religious studies but are not primarily about religious studies, will not meet the requirements of this syllabus. Schools are encouraged to facilitate examination entry for as many students as possible but this is not a requirement of this syllabus.

Post-16

Suggestions for areas of study are provided. However, wherever possible, students should have the opportunity to follow a course, or modules, which lead to external accreditation.

The recommended minimum time allocation for religious studies in this phase is 6 hours per year.

Summary of theme-related key questions for Key Stages 1-3

Key Stage 1

- What do people believe about God, people and the natural world?
- How and why are some stories and books sacred and important in religion?
- Why am I special?
- What does it mean to belong?
- What can people learn from religious leaders and teachers?
- How and why are religious celebrations important to people?
- How and why do symbols express religious meaning?

Key Stage 2

- How do people's beliefs about God, the world and others impact on their lives?
- How do sacred texts and other sources help people to understand God, the world and human life?
- Why and how are people influenced and inspired by others?
- What is expected of a person in following a religion or belief?
- How do religious families and communities practise their faith, and what contributions do they make to local life?
- How do religions and beliefs respond to global issues of human rights, fairness, social justice and the importance of the environment?
- Why, where and how do people worship?
- Why are some occasions sacred to believers?
- How do people's beliefs about life after death influence the way they live?
- How and why are religious and spiritual ideas expressed and in the ways they are?

Key Stage 3

- How do religions and, where appropriate, secular philosophies understand God, the world and the purpose/nature of human life?
- How do religions help believers decide what is right and wrong?
- Why do concepts and developments in science often present challenges to people with different religious and secular beliefs?
- How do religions understand one another?
- How do people live as believers in the modern world applying their beliefs to everyday life and relationships?
- How do religions and, where appropriate, secular philosophies promote a balance between rights and responsibilities?
- Why and how might believers accept they have responsibilities to care for the world in which they live?
- How and why do people of different faiths engage together in activities to help the wider community and sometimes come into conflict?
- How and why is spirituality expressed in different ways by people who hold a variety of religious and secular beliefs?

Foundation Stage

The Foundation Stage describes the phase of a child's education between the ages of 3 and 5 (up to what many refer to as the end of reception). Religious Education is statutory for all pupils of this age registered on the school roll. This statutory requirement for Religious Education does not apply to nursery classes in maintained schools and is not, therefore, a legal requirement for much of the Foundation Stage. However, many will agree it can form a valuable part of the educational experience of children throughout the key stage.

Children will come from a variety of cultural, religious and secular backgrounds. Some will come from overtly religious homes, some will have occasional experience of religion, others none at all. All children need to be valued whatever their backgrounds or belief systems. It is important that teachers take this variety of experience into account when planning.

Meeting the needs of children under five in a busy Foundation class whilst at the same time providing their statutory entitlement to Religious Education can be a challenge. The subject must be taught in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus or, in voluntary aided faith schools, in line with a syllabus approved by the governing body, which will have taken into account any requirements set out in the school's trust deed.

During the Foundation Stage children will be developing knowledge and understanding and appropriate vocabulary about, where they belong within their family and the wider community, different religions and the different ways of expressing and celebrating faiths.

They will also be developing the following attitudes and skills:

- a sense of curiosity
- interest and enjoyment in discovery
- empathy and open-mindedness
- commenting and asking questions
- expressing feelings and preferences.

Children should begin to explore the world of religion in terms of religious figures, books, times, places and objects (see page 21) and by visiting places of worship. They listen to and talk about stories.

They may be introduced to religious words and use their senses in exploring religions and beliefs, practices and forms of expression. They reflect on their own feelings and experiences. They use their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation and wonder of the world in which they live.

Every teacher of young children knows that knowledge is not fragmented in the early years, and all learning is part of a glorious whole. Children will learn in their own way through play, first hand experiences and people to make sense of the world. They will learn through:

- visual/spatial expressions shown in art and other creative activities
- auditory experiences listening to music, stories and rhymes
- kinaesthetic activities such as movement and games
- verbal/linguistic communication in a range of speaking and listening activities
- mathematical experiences by making simple models and patterns
- music and songs from different cultures
- naturalistic engagement with living things and the environment
- interpersonal skills offering co-operative opportunities.

The guidance given here is to help the teacher find ways of helping children to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally within the six areas of learning and make provision for children to learn about beliefs and cultures. A teacher is always guided by the needs of each individual child, and effective and careful planning ensures that these needs are met.

The Foundation Stage curriculum comprises six inter-related areas of learning:

- personal, social and emotional development
- communication, language and literacy
- mathematical development
- knowledge and understanding of the world
- physical development
- creative development.

Religious Education can make an active contribution to all of these areas but has a particularly important contribution to make to:

- personal, social and emotional development
- communication, language and literacy
- knowledge and understanding of the world
- creative development.

For each of these areas, there follows examples of Religious Education-related experiences and opportunities.

Four areas of learning

1 Personal, social and emotional development

- Children use some stories from religious traditions as a stimulus to reflect on their own feelings and experiences and explore them in various ways.
- Using a story as a stimulus, children reflect on the words and actions of characters and decide what they would have done in a similar situation. They learn about the story and its meanings through activity and play.
- Using role-play as a stimulus, children talk about some of the ways that people show love and concern for others and why this is important.
- Children think about issues of right and wrong and how humans help one another.

2 Communication, language and literacy

- Children have opportunities to respond creatively, imaginatively and meaningfully to memorable experiences.
- Using a religious celebration as a stimulus, children talk about the special events associated with the celebration.
- Through artefacts, stories and music, children learn about important religious celebrations.

3 Knowledge and understanding of the world

- Children ask and answer questions about religion and culture, as they occur naturally within their everyday experiences.
- Children visit places of worship.
- They listen and respond to a wide range of religious and ethnic groups.
- They handle artefacts with curiosity and respect.
- Having visited a local place of worship, children learn new words associated with the place, showing respect.

4 Creative development

- Using religious artefacts as a stimulus, children think about and express meanings associated with the artefact.
- Children share their own experiences and feelings and those of others, and are supported in reflecting on them.

Areas for religious exploration

The table on the following page(s) lays out some suggestions, from all six religions compulsorily covered within this syllabus, of material which could be included in Foundation Stage topics. The further tables illustrate contexts in which the material might be included.

It is a requirement of this syllabus that in exploring these areas of learning, children should encounter Christianity and at least one other world religion.

Suggestions for Foundation Stage Religious Education illustrating five areas of exploration

1 Religious figures	2 Religious books/stories	3 Religious times	4 Religious places	5 Religious objects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • religious leaders eg vicars, priests, rabbis, imams, gurus, teachers • Great religious figures eg Jesus, Gotama Buddha, Ganesh, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), Moses, Guru Har Gobind • stories from faith traditions about people who help others eg Jesus healing the man who could not walk, The Good Samaritan, St Francis (C) • Siddattha and the swan (B) • Hanuman (H) • Muhammad (pbuh) and the sleeping cat (I) • Ruth (J) • Guru Har Gobind's Cloak, Bhai Ghanaya (S) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zacchaeus (C) • houses built on sand and rock (C) • Siddattha and the swan (B) • Ganesh (H) • Muhammad (pbuh) and the sleeping cat (I) • Muhammad (pbuh) and the crying camel • Joseph (J/C) • Jonah (J/C) • David and Goliath (J/C) • Ruth (J/C) • Guru Har Gobind's cloak (S) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christmas, Harvest, Easter, Church colours for seasons (C) • Chinese New Year • Divali, Raksha Bandhan (H) • Eid ul Fitr, The Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) birthday (I) • Sukkot, Hanukkah, Simchat Torah, Shabbat (J) • birthday of Guru Nanak (S) • baptism • naming ceremonies • weddings • times of prayer and worship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local places of worship • Memorials eg seats, windows, grave stones • homes inc. home shrines • the environment/world and stories about caring for it eg • Noah and the rainbow • Gotama Buddha and the Bodhi tree • Jesus's birth in Bethlehem, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clothes eg clergy, Salvation Army uniforms, wedding clothes, jewellery (crosses, crucifixes etc), ihram (clothes worn on Hajj), kippah (J), tallit (J), Joseph's coat, 5 Ks (S) • food eg Shabbat (J), Langar (S), festival foods • artefacts eg home shrines, items within places of worship, prayer mat (I), prayer beads, mezuzah (J), tallit (J)
<p>Some suggestions for leading questions</p>	<p>Some suggestions for leading questions</p>	<p>Some suggestions for leading questions</p>	<p>Some suggestions for leading questions</p>	<p>Some suggestions for leading questions</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are you? • What makes you the same or different from other people? • Why are these people special? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do you like this story? • What makes this story important? • Where does this story come from? • Who told this story? • What can we learn from this story? • How do we look after special and sacred books? • How do we know this is an important book? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What makes a time special for you and other people? • Why and how do we celebrate? (saying thank you, to remember, with others/community) • What do people say thank you for and to whom? • What is praying? • Why is praying so important to some people? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What makes a place special and important? • How do you/people keep this place special? • Where is your special place? • Why is it special for you? • What is special and/or important about this place for some people? • What important things can you/people see? • How do you/people feel in this place? • What different things do people do? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What makes something precious? • Why are these things precious to some people? • How should we treat things that are precious to other people?

Key: C – Christianity; B – Buddhism; H – Hinduism; I – Islam; J – Judaism; S - Sikhism

Incorporating Religious Education in Foundation Stage topics might look like this

Learning Themes	Possible religious material
All about me/myself/ ourselves	Baptism
	The Mezuzah in our home
	David and Goliath
	Ganesh
	Jonah
	Prayer beads
	The Good Samaritan
	The Lord's Prayer used in times of prayer
	Joseph
	Zacchaeus
Animals/creatures/ minibeasts	Chinese New Year
	St Francis
	Ganesh
	Hanuman
	Muhammad (pbuh) and the sleeping cat/crying camel
Babies	Baptism
	Christmas/Nativity
Celebration	Chinese New Year
	Christmas, Easter, Harvest
	Divali, Raksha Bandhan
	Eid-ul-Fitr, Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) birthday
	Sukkot, Hanukkah, Simchat Torah, Shabbat
	Birthday of Guru Nanak
	Baptism, naming ceremonies
	Weddings
Clothes	Clothes worn by the clergy
	Weddings
	Kippah, tallit
	The Five Ks
	Joseph's coat

Learning Themes	Possible religious material
Favourite stories/ books	Zacchaeus
	Houses built on sand and rock
	Siddattha and the Swan
	Muhammad (pbuh) and the sleeping cat/crying camel
	Ganesh
	Joseph
	Jonah
	David and Goliath
	Ruth
	Guru Har Gobind's Cloak
Food	Festival foods eg Easter, Harvest, Shabbat
	Langar
Growing/spring/gardens	Easter
	Harvest
	Gotama Buddha and the Bodhi Tree
Homes/where I live/the local environment	Harvest
	Places of worship
	Times of prayer
	Memorials
	Houses built on sand and rock
	Gotama Buddha and the Bodhi Tree
	Home shrines
	Prayer mat
	The Mezuzah in our home
	Shabbat
Noah and the rainbow	
The natural world	Harvest
	Houses build on sand and rock
	Siddattha and the Swan
	Muhammad (pbuh) and the crying camel
	Noah and the rainbow

Learning Themes	Possible religious material
My family/families	Weddings
	St Francis
	Raksha Bandhan
	Ganesh
	Prayer Mat
	Joseph
	Ruth
	The Five Ks
Materials	Houses built on sand and rock
	Prayer Mat
	Tallit
	Guru Har Gobind's Cloak
People who help us/others	Religious leaders
	Stories of Jesus healing the sick
	The Good Samaritan
	St Francis
	Siddattha and the Swan
	Muhammad (pbuh) and the sleeping cat/crying camel
	Hanuman
	Ruth
	Guru Har Gobind's Cloak
	Bhai Ghanaya
Seasons	Chinese New Year
	Easter
	Harvest
	Divali
	Sukkot
Water	Baptism
	Noah and the rainbow
Weather	Houses built on sand and rock
	Noah and the rainbow

Thanks go to the Solihull SACRE for permission to use and modify this table from the Solihull Handbook for Religious Education in the Foundation Stage.

Religious Education in Key Stage 1

Throughout this key stage, pupils will explore religion through an encounter with Christianity and at least Judaism as another religion. They learn about different beliefs about God and the world around them. They encounter and respond to a range of stories, artefacts and other religious materials. They learn to recognise that beliefs are expressed in a variety of ways, and begin to use specialist vocabulary. They begin to understand the importance and value of religion and belief, especially for other children and their families. Pupils ask relevant questions and develop a sense of wonder about the world, using their imaginations. They talk about what is important to them and others, valuing themselves, reflecting on their own feelings and experiences and developing a sense of belonging.

Key aspects of Religious Education:

Learning about religion

Pupils should be taught to:

- explore a range of religious stories and sacred writings and talk about their meanings
- name and explore a range of celebrations, worship and rituals in religion, noting similarities where appropriate
- identify the importance, for some people, of belonging to a religion and recognise the difference this makes to their lives
- explore how religious beliefs and ideas can be expressed through the arts and communicate their responses
- identify and suggest meanings for religious symbols and begin to use a range of religious words.

Learning from religion

Pupils should be taught to:

- reflect on and consider religious and spiritual feelings, experiences and concepts such as

worship, wonder, praise, thanks, concern, joy and sadness

- ask and respond imaginatively to puzzling questions, communicating their ideas
- identify what matters to them and others, including those with religious commitments, and communicate their responses
- reflect on how spiritual and moral values relate to their own behaviour
- recognise that religious teachings and ideas make a difference to individuals, families and the local community.

Experiences and opportunities: All pupils should have the chance to experience some or all of the following opportunities:

- visiting places of worship and focusing on symbols and feelings
- listening and responding to visitors from local faith communities
- using their senses and having times of quiet reflection
- using art and design, music, dance and drama to develop their creative talents and imagination
- sharing their own beliefs, ideas and values and talking about their feelings and experiences
- beginning to use ICT to explore religions and beliefs as practised in the local and wider community.

Breadth of study

During this key stage pupils should engage with the following key questions:

- What do people believe about God, people and the natural world?
- How and why are some stories and books sacred and important in religion?
- Why am I special?
- What does it mean to belong?

- What can people learn from religious leaders and teachers?
- How and why are religious celebrations important to people?
- How and why do symbols express religious meaning?

Pupils' answers to these questions should draw on the following areas of study:

- Christianity
- Judaism
- other religions, as appropriate
- a secular world view, where appropriate.

Questions

Questions form the heart of this syllabus to highlight for all its readers that Religious Education is an exploration and enquiry which can give rise to diverse answers and beliefs. The theme-related questions have been grouped into three main areas of focus: *Learning about believing*, *Ways of living* and *Sharing faith*. Although presented in this thematic format, readers should be aware that a Religious Education course does not need to be structured in this way. Religions can be approached as discrete areas of study by combining questions in a different way.

It is important to remember when using the following units of study that all the key questions detailed for the exploration of Christianity must be addressed. A selection must be made from the questions outlined for the study of Judaism. They must be drawn from each of the three areas of focus. Schools may choose to extend their enquiry into religion by including other religions (found in the units of study and in the appendix at the end of the document). In this case, questions can be freely selected from those outlined – it is not necessary to address each area of focus.

In planning Religious Education courses, it is essential that sufficient emphasis is given to the *Learning from religion* aspect of the subject. Suggestions for appropriate questions are made in relation to each area of focus on the following pages.

