

Believing and Belonging

Religious Education
Agreed Syllabus
2024-2029



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Syllabus written by Pennine Learning Associates Ltd.
www.penninelearning.com.



Design by Claire Barnett Design, www.clairebarnett.co.uk

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NOTE: This is a shortened version of the full syllabus and excludes medium term planning and detailed curriculum appendices. These are included in the licensed copy available to participating schools and local authorities and can be found on their intranet sites.

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Introduction

This is a comprehensive syllabus for Religious Education at all key stages. It is supported by optional detailed planning for use in schools. The title, *Believing and Belonging*, reflects the twin aims that RE must stimulate interest and nurture understanding of religion/worldviews, while also contributing to pupils' awareness of and sensitivity to diversity in our communities and world.

This edition, approved for teaching from 2024-29 has evolved over years of experience and builds on many previous features. However, it also strengthens sequencing of knowledge and offers a structure for ensuring learning is both broad and deep.

Key features

The syllabus is designed around **six learning pathways**. These have been developed from '**Big Ideas**'¹ and act as the framework for sequencing learning in religion and worldviews at all key stages from age 5 to 18.

While organising the curriculum along these pathways, learners concurrently develop **substantive knowledge of specific religions/worldviews**.

The syllabus requires a school curriculum to both:

- achieve a **broad**, but rigorous, understanding of religions/worldviews in the context of our local communities and our country;
- provide for **deeper** focused study of specific topics and questions.

To support teachers, an optional compendium of **detailed planning is available**, made-to-measure by expert writers to match the syllabus content. This includes:

- **core** units which develop the broad overview and context;
- **focus** units which entail deeper, concentrated exploration of specific areas.

The syllabus draws on, and is indebted to, the Big Ideas project (<https://bigideasforre.org>). It also reflects the National Content Standard (REC July 2023) <https://bigideasforre.org/big-ideas-and-the-re-councils-national-statement-of-entitlement/>

¹ Wiggins, Grant and McTighe, Jay (2005). *Understanding by Design* (expanded 2nd edition). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).
Cush, Denise (2023). 'But are you religious yourself? Being non-binary between 'religious' and 'non-religious' *Professional REflection* in *REToday*, Vol. 40 (2), pp.53-58.

What's different?

This syllabus has been developed from previous versions used in West Yorkshire. The name *Believing and Belonging* has been retained as this encapsulates the aims of RE in our area. Many of the features of the previous syllabus from 2019 have been retained and developed, including charts of substantive knowledge that could be taught in key stages.

Content taught through pathways

Learning is arranged through six broad pathways based on the *Big Ideas* project. Many of the units of work will appear similar to suggested units from the 2019 syllabus, but it is important to note that the focus of the units has moved from a more traditional religious studies approach to a curriculum sequenced through these pathways.

Coverage of religions/worldviews

The syllabus no longer specifies that certain religions should be taught at specific key stages. Rather, teachers should introduce and develop understanding of specific faiths incrementally so that all learners build substantive knowledge sequentially. Schools have choice about which religions/worldviews they include in specific topics but it is essential that pupils are taught about all the main religious traditions during the course of their RE.

Lived experience

The syllabus emphasises the importance of pupils and students encountering the lived experience of people in order to understand diversity within religions and worldviews.

Changes to EYFS, SEND and Sixth Form

This syllabus takes into account changes to the EYFS, incorporating the EYFS Framework (2020/2021) and Development Matters 2021. The SEND section also recognises the Engagement Model. Pupils may be introduced to content from the RE syllabus through the five areas of engagement: exploration, realisation, anticipation, persistence and initiation. The model for engagement in the sixth form (KS5) now includes suggested topics and themes for use and offers links to exemplar planning from the Big Ideas project.

Units of Work

The optional units of work have been substantially rewritten and new ones have been added. They now link with the pathways of substantive knowledge and allow for flexibility in the religions/worldviews covered. Details are from page 54.

Purpose and Value of Religious Education



Purpose and Value of Religious Education

‘Schools should, through their RE programmes, aim systematically to prepare students for the spiritual and intellectual challenges of living in a world with diverse religions and beliefs as well as non-belief’

Big Ideas for Religious Education, Wintersgill 2017

RE ‘should explore the important role that religious and non-religious worldviews play in all human life. This is an essential area of study if pupils are to be well prepared for life in a world where controversy over such matters is pervasive and where many people lack the knowledge to make their own informed decisions. It is a subject for all pupils, whatever their own family background and personal beliefs and practices.’

Commission on RE, September 2018

This syllabus is called *Believing and Belonging* because it weaves two key threads:

First, it is about beliefs and values. It aims to develop learners’ understanding of religions/worldviews, exploring their commonality and diversity.

Specifically, RE:

a. Enables learners to develop a broad and balanced understanding of religions/worldviews.

RE’s primary purpose is to give learners a broad understanding of Christianity, other religious traditions and non-religious beliefs, and understand how these are woven into human experience and applied to life and decisions.

b. Empowers learners to develop and use critical thinking skills.

Well taught, RE is a rigorous academic subject, supporting problem solving and critical thinking skills. It will inspire and motivate learners to enquire into religious and purposeful questions. Engaging and stimulating RE helps to nurture informed and resilient responses to misunderstanding, stereotyping and division. It offers a place in the curriculum where difficult or ‘risky’ questions can be tackled within a safe but challenging context.

Secondly, the syllabus is about ‘belonging’. It aims to nurture pupils’ awareness of the treasury of diverse beliefs and cultures, as well as sensitivity to the questions and challenges that these can present. Ultimately, we all share a common humanity and our own patch of the Earth. In this way RE plays a part in helping pupils to discover their own place, identity and journey through life.

Specifically, RE will:

c. Broaden perspectives of faiths and cultures, encouraging tolerance of diversity.

A universal RE entitlement means that the subject must aim to develop understanding of diversity, empathy and cohesion. RE develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other religious traditions and worldviews and explores their responses to life's challenges. This gives them the knowledge and skills to flourish both within their own community and as members of a diverse and global society.

d. Develop their own personal worldview, identity, values and spirituality.

The role of RE is neither to promote nor undermine organised religion. But part of its purpose is to provide structured opportunity for consideration of the non-material aspects of life. RE can contribute dynamically to children and young people's education by provoking challenging questions about meaning and purpose in life, beliefs about God, ultimate reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. It can support their own discovery of their personal journeys of meaning, purpose and value, whether or not they identify with a specific, organised worldview.

e. Contribute to developing learners as positive, participating citizens of the world.

Human beings are strengthened and empowered by learning from each other. So, through experience and culture, it is possible to explore the opportunities, challenges and purpose of our individual lives and communities. RE plays an important role in preparing pupils for their future, for employment and lifelong learning.

It enhances spiritual, moral, social and cultural education by:

- Developing awareness of the fundamental questions raised by human experiences, and of how religious teachings can relate to them;
- Responding to such questions with reference to the teachings and practices of religions and other belief systems, relating them to their own understanding and experience;
- Reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study;
- Nurturing curiosity and insights to become positive, participating citizens.

We hope that this syllabus, 'Believing and Belonging' will provide a stimulating and rigorous framework for schools to teach about religions/worldviews, alongside nurturing tolerance, respect, empathy and kindness in our schools and local communities.

Principles and Requirements



Principles and Requirements

Learning Pathways

The syllabus is based around six threads or 'pathways' through which the most important features of RE may be understood. Coherent and sequential learning is built on these pathways and then earthed by thematic and systematic study of specific religions/worldviews.

The syllabus therefore aims to:

- develop progressive understanding of the 'pathways' and
- build rich and profound knowledge of religions/worldviews.

Pathway 1: The Nature of Religion and Belief



Religions/worldviews involve interconnected patterns of beliefs, practices and values. They are also highly diverse and change in response to new situations and challenges. These patterns of diversity and change can be the cause of debate, tension and conflict or result in new, creative developments. *(Based on Big Idea 1: Continuity, Change and Diversity)*

Pathway 2: Expressing Belief



It is often difficult to express deepest beliefs, feelings, emotions and religious experiences using everyday language. Instead, people may use a variety of different approaches including figurative language and a range of literary genres. In addition, people sometimes use non-verbal forms of communication such as art, music, drama and dance that seek to explain or illustrate religious or non-religious ideas or experiences.

(Based on Big Idea 2: Words and Beyond)

Pathway 3: A Good Life



Many people, whether religious or not, strive to live according to what they understand as a good life. Religious and non-religious communities often share an understanding as to the sort of characteristics and behaviours a good person will seek to achieve, as well as dealing with what is, or is not, acceptable moral behaviour. The ideal is usually presented in the lives and character of exemplary members. There are points of agreement and disagreement over the interpretation and application of moral principles both across and within different religions and worldviews.

(Based on Big Idea 3: A Good Life)

Pathway 4: Personal Journey



Human beings have deeply felt experiences, which they may refer to as being 'religious' or 'spiritual' or simply part of what it means to be human. These experiences can take place in both religious and non-religious contexts and may produce a heightened sense of awareness and mystery, or of identity, purpose and belonging. The experience is sometimes so powerful that it transforms people's lives. As a result, people may change their beliefs and allegiances and on rare occasions the experience of a single person has led to the formation of a new religion or worldview. *(Based on Big Idea 4: Making Sense of Life's Experiences)*

Pathway 5: Influence and Authority



Religious and non-religious communities interact with wider society and cultures. These communities affect societies by shaping their traditions, laws, political systems, festivals, values, rituals and arts. The patterns of influence vary significantly in different societies and at different points in time. Some societies are influenced predominantly by one religion or worldview, others by several or many. Religions and worldviews often appeal to a highly respected authority or vision, and this can have significant impacts on societies and cultures, whether positive or negative. *(Based on Big Idea 5: Influence and Power)*

Pathway 6: The Big Picture



Religions and worldviews provide comprehensive accounts of how and why the world is as it is. These accounts are sometimes called 'grand narratives'. They seek to answer the big questions about the universe and the nature of humanity. These narratives are usually based on approaches to life, texts or traditions, which are taken to be authoritative. People interpret and understand these texts and traditions in different ways. *(Based on Big Idea 6: The Big Picture)*

Substantive Knowledge

Within the rich conceptual understanding developed through the learning pathways, the syllabus also requires a school curriculum to build **subject-specific substantive knowledge** of faiths and beliefs. This knowledge will grow throughout a learning career and will be appropriate to the age and local context.

The law on agreed syllabuses (1988) refers to ‘principal religions represented in Great Britain’. This has normally been interpreted as six: Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. In this syllabus each of these traditions and a non-religious worldview will be studied in all key stages, and this will incrementally grow substantive knowledge in each. **Although schools have flexibility about the particular religions/worldviews included in many topics, they must ensure that all pupils are taught about the range of faiths and beliefs mentioned above in a balanced and thorough way.** In addition, **schools are free to study other religions/worldviews, as well as groups *within* traditions**, as they judge appropriate for the context of the school and pupils. Examples might include Jainism, Zoroastrianism, Baha’i, Latter-Day Saints (Mormons), Jehovah’s Witnesses, Rastafari and contemporary Paganism.

Study of a specific faith is not restricted to a particular key stage. Rather, **any curriculum should introduce and develop understanding of specific faiths incrementally** so that all learners build their substantive knowledge sequentially. In this way, all learners will experience the breadth of faiths and beliefs in this country. This is not the same as ‘blanket coverage’ of every faith in every key stage and care must be taken to root learning in the conceptual pathways and to be very careful with transition and sequencing.

To assist teachers **guides of suggested content** is provided in the appendices. This is intended to be a guide rather than a checklist so that schools will be able to see they have a balance of the topics and religions included. **Schools are not required to include every topic listed but to ensure they have this good overall balance and sequence.**

The optional **exemplar units** provide resources that integrate the pathways with sequenced learning about specific religions and beliefs. These are the core and focus units written to support the syllabus.

It is important that the **curriculum reflects the local context** and schools have flexibility and responsibility to do so. This may also mean recognising the importance of curriculum coverage for traditions that will *not* be experienced locally, for that very reason.

Teaching should **explicitly include study of both religious and other worldviews** at every key stage. This recognises that one of RE’s most important contributions to education is enabling all learners to explore questions of meaning, purpose and value. This is important from a perspective of faith or non-religious understanding and recognises that many people do not adhere to formal religious structures.

Disciplinary and Personal Knowledge

Alongside subject specific substantive knowledge, the syllabus is designed to enrich other forms of learning. An education in religion and worldviews will be rooted in **several distinct, but complementary, academic disciplines**, including study of religions, theology, philosophy, history, sociology, psychology, literary criticism, creative arts, media studies and natural sciences. There will be an emphasis on a particular disciplinary approach depending on the area of study or key question concerned.

RE also provides rich and varied opportunities to develop **personal knowledge** and perspectives, both reflecting on the context of a pupil's own background and offering space to evaluate and learn from the views and experiences of others.

Breadth and Depth

The syllabus requires a school curriculum to:

- achieve a **broad**, but rigorous, understanding of religion and worldviews and the context within communities and our country;
- provide for **deeper** focused study of specific topics and questions, as well as providing pupils with the tools to navigate the complex world of religion and belief.

A curriculum should be rich in knowledge but should not promote indigestion. The subject, Religion and Worldviews, has vast scope and it is impossible to cover everything so the aim must be to provide a broad understanding of religion and worldviews with deep learning of selective elements. In this way, learners will develop 'cumulative sufficiency' of knowledge which they can apply to different contexts and situations.

To do this, the syllabus provides exemplar units of work covering the learning pathways and coverage of world religions and beliefs. However, schools may wish to adapt these or to develop their own sequence.

Great care should be taken to ensure planning and resources are appropriate in terms of learning content, quality and sensitivity. If teachers use ready-made materials they should be checked thoroughly to satisfy these requirements. Careless or insensitive use of resources may cause needless misunderstanding, confusion or upset.

Units of Work

The syllabus provides exemplar core and focus units of work based on key questions:

Pupils will study **core** units of work based on the pathways. Within these pathways, the programme of study must enable pupils to accumulate sufficient knowledge of the religions and worldviews studied. This will enable them to have a broad general understanding of these, enriched and extended by deeper exploration of selected aspects.

Other **focus** units will be added to deepen knowledge and enrich the experiences of pupils in each key stage. These are essential to maintain depth as well as breadth in learning.

Outlines of core units are contained in the syllabus and these, or the school's own iteration of the themes, must be included in a curriculum. A selection of focus units must also be studied.

Detailed planning for both core and focus units is also available through subscription to the Believing and Belonging Detailed Planning Folder. Schools may use or edit these schemes or devise their own. They are intended as supporting material not as compulsory lessons.

Details about the units of work are found from page 54.

Assessment

Assessment should be based on progress towards the end of key stage statements. To help teachers, the syllabus also offers some interim expectations for the end of lower key stage 2. Assessment should be based on progress children and students make throughout each of the units of work.

The syllabus provides statements for each pathway against which to assess pupils progress. Pupils do not need to be assessed formally after every unit of work. But, as a minimum, schools need to:

- report to parents at the end of each key stage, indicating progress towards the relevant end of key stage statement;
- report to any school to which a pupil is transferring, including the routine transfer to a secondary school or college.

Schools may wish to measure the impact of RE in other ways, both quantitatively and qualitatively. For example: considering pupils' attitudes and responses to diversity; assessing the extent and impact of engagement with faith communities through visits or on-line contacts.

Guidance on assessment is provided from page 40.

Additional Considerations

Lived Experience

Religion is not only defined by historical texts and official doctrine, but also by lived experience, both past and present. It is important that curriculum planning includes a diverse portfolio of evidence reflecting both these strands.

Serious engagement with narratives and texts from different traditions is foundational for understanding of faiths. Skills of interpretation and analysis (hermeneutics) can be developed in a progressive way from the very earliest stage in the curriculum. Care should be given to select a variety of texts and narratives to reflect aspects of religious experience.

At the same time, religion is not defined exclusively by its official texts or doctrines. The stories of individuals and communities help pupils to understand how beliefs are lived out or challenged by life and circumstances. RE has depth and substance when it offers the opportunity to engage with people and places of faith within or outside school. In the syllabus units there are suggestions of how teachers can celebrate the faiths and views within their own classrooms and school communities.

Many schools find it invaluable to arrange such engagement to help students to broaden their understanding and experience of our communities and world. Opportunities can also be developed and exploited online. Examples and resources are suggested in both the units of work and in the section 'Enriching RE through engagement with faith communities' on page 60.

RE supports community cohesion and SMSC education, including fundamental British aspirations and values. Teachers and schools should take every opportunity to widen the opportunities for all pupils. This could be by:

- Celebrating a variety of local, national and international festivals e.g. Festivals of light
- Understanding how different people celebrate both religious and non-religious festivals
- Charity work including refugee week, children in need, sports relief
- Remembrance Day
- Interfaith Week and including diversity of religious belief and faiths e.g. Bahá'í
- National and international awareness days/ weeks

Diversity in Religion and Worldviews

Diversity between and within traditions must be recognised. The law requires schools following agreed syllabuses to teach about Christianity and other-principal religions represented in Great Britain. This normally includes three 'Abrahamic' faiths: Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and three 'Dharmic' faiths: Hindu Dharma, Buddhism and Sikhi, commonly referred to as Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism. However, there is enormous diversity within these traditions and this should be recognised in curriculum planning. The syllabus also encourages schools to study other faiths and

traditions beyond these six. Schools have discretion in this and should reflect the community and context within which they work.

It is also important to recognise that official systems of religion and belief are often determined by the powerful and there may be other forms and expressions that have their own integrity and value.

Systematic Knowledge and Thematic Application

The curriculum should both develop systematic knowledge of individual traditions and apply this to appropriate themes. Pupils need to gain broad knowledge of specified religions/worldviews. As in all education, the task is to provide a learning pathway combining clarity with depth, avoiding the twin pitfalls of confusion and oversimplification. Any curriculum plan needs to balance two elements within or between units of work:

1. Discrete study of specific religions /worldviews allowing pupils to develop an overview of the beliefs, practices and context of particular traditions, such as Christianity, Hindu Dharma or Humanism. This requires systematic and progressive development of content and knowledge.
2. Application of this knowledge to significant, engaging and relevant questions about human life. Here, pupils will investigate key questions and topics which are influenced by religions / worldviews. They may be questions that relate to individuals or more universal topics.

The exemplar units of work cover this combination but schools can also develop their own.

Which syllabus should schools use?

This syllabus is authorised for use in maintained schools by the Standing Advisory Councils for RE (SACREs) in the participating local authorities for five years from 1st September 2024. It may also be used by other schools within these areas.

All schools in England, whatever their foundation or governance, must teach religious education from age 5 to 18.

Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based, and which:

- *promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils, and*
- *prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life and all state schools... must teach religious education... all schools must publish their curriculum by subject and academic year online.*

The National Curriculum in England: Framework Document, September 2013, p.4

RE must be included in the curriculum for all registered pupils, including all pupils in Reception classes and sixth form, but excluding:

- pupils in nursery schools or nursery classes in primary schools;
- any person aged nineteen or above for whom further education is being provided at school;
- any person over compulsory school age who is receiving part-time education.

Maintained community, foundation and voluntary controlled (VC) schools

The law provides that:

- in maintained community, foundation or voluntary controlled schools, RE is taught in accordance with the local Agreed Syllabus;
- the requirements are that a syllabus must 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main, Christian while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain';

Maintained community schools should use this syllabus as a basis for their own curriculum development and may be supported by the comprehensive resources and detailed schemes of work provided in the Believing and Belonging Detailed Planning Folder. However, these resources are non-statutory and schools are encouraged to adapt and develop their own programmes based on the framework of this syllabus. Resources are also available on the Big Ideas website at <https://bigideasforre.org/>

Voluntary Controlled or Foundation Church of England schools must teach RE according to the Locally Agreed Syllabus of the authority where the school is located, unless parents request RE in accordance with the trust deed or religious designation of the school.

In Voluntary Controlled schools, there may be a denominational requirement to provide a certain proportion of teaching from the religious designation.

The syllabus is supported by the West Yorkshire detailed Planning folder which includes revised content requirements and comprehensive schemes of work for Christianity in every year group. SACREs also very strongly advise all schools to ensure their curriculum includes robust coverage of the variety of religious and non-religious worldviews and diversity within them.

Voluntary Aided (VA) Schools

In voluntary aided schools RE must be taught in accordance with the trust deed. In Church of England VA schools, governors are ultimately responsible for the subject and they must ensure that their RE syllabus and provision is in accordance with 'the rites, practices and beliefs of the Church of England'. The Anglican Diocese of Leeds recommends that VA schools base the curriculum on the diocesan syllabus. However, this local authority agreed syllabus may also be used to support the teaching of RE if governors so choose.

Academy and Free Schools

All schools must teach RE. Academy schools may, but are not required to, follow the locally agreed RE syllabus. Alternatively, they can devise or choose their own syllabus, but it must be in line with the legislation that underpins the locally agreed syllabus. The legal requirement to teach RE to all pupils aged 5-18 is unchanged.

Curriculum time and provision

It is a legal requirement that all pupils aged 5-18 are entitled to religious education. It follows that there must be sufficient time to teach the syllabus comprehensively and with integrity. In maintained schools the curriculum is defined by this local syllabus. Academy schools must teach RE according to the requirements of their trust deed or funding agreement, which will in practice mean following either this syllabus or an alternative one.

To deliver RE with integrity, schools will need to allocate at least the equivalent of an hour a week. This should apply to all learners at all key stages including those in KS4 who are not entered for a public examination. Organisation of this time is a matter for schools. It can be helpful to combine some aspects of RE with other subjects for some topics in a cross-curricular pattern, particularly in primary schools. This will suit some topics but other aspects of the syllabus may need to be delivered in discrete time.

Half or full day blocks may also be used to deliver aspects of the curriculum. This has the advantage of enabling sustained study and a variety of learning opportunities, particularly if linked to visits outside school. However schools choose to organise the timetable and teaching of RE, the integrity of the curriculum must be maintained. The RE content should be clear, rigorous and identifiable.

GCSE courses will normally require more than an hour a week and restricting teaching to one hour a week risks sacrificing effective learning.

Curriculum Information



Early Years and Foundation Stage

RE is a legal requirement for all pupils on the school roll, including all those in the reception year. The Early Years Foundation Stage framework is organised across seven areas of learning rather than individual subject areas. The EYFS curriculum allows for flexible planning to respond to current interests and needs of the children in school, including learning about religious and cultural communities and the celebrations and places associated with them.

Children in EYFS should use all their senses to begin to learn about religion and worldviews through special people, books, times, places, and objects. Opportunities for children to gain first-hand experience of religious beliefs and practices should be woven into the curriculum by handling religious artefacts, meeting people from faith communities and visiting places of worship.

They should use their imagination and curiosity to develop appreciation of, and wonder at, the natural world. They should learn to appreciate and value themselves and others, recognising and celebrating diversity.

Children should be encouraged to ask questions and talk about their own feelings and experiences, using subject-specific vocabulary as it is introduced to them. They should listen to and talk about stories from a range of different religions and world views.

Planning for RE in EYFS

In line with the EYFS Framework (2023), a well-considered RE offer, woven into an existing early years curriculum, should provide a wide range of purposeful and meaningful activities based on the characteristics of effective teaching and learning, namely:

- playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
- active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements.
- creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Practitioners should reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately. Understanding of the backgrounds and experience of young children is important, including whether or not they come from a faith background.

Material should be drawn from Christianity and at least one other religious tradition. Traditions/ religions represented in the class or setting (including non-religious worldviews) offer a good starting point for first-hand learning.

The Early Learning Goals (ELGs) for Understanding the World

Although all areas of the EYFS goals are relevant, RE particularly supports development in Understanding the World and PSED. The table below offers some suggested activities to support Early Learning Goals (ELGs) using RE content:

<i>Children will be learning to:</i>	<i>Examples of how to support this using RE content</i>	<i>Pathway links</i>
<p>Talk about members of their immediate family and community</p> <p>Name and describe people who are familiar to them</p> <p>ELG: Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society</p>	<p>During dedicated talk time, listen to what children say about their family. Share information about your own family, giving children time to ask questions or make comments. Encourage children to share pictures of their family and listen to what they say about the pictures. Using examples from real life and from books, show children how there are many different families.</p> <p>Talk about special or precious objects found in their homes – including religious objects and pictures. Learn about and handle some religious artefacts.</p> <p>Talk about people that the children may have come across within their community, such as the police, the fire service, doctors and teachers. Listen to what children say about their own experiences with people who are familiar to them.</p> <p>Encourage the children to talk about any religious or non-religious members of the local community with whom they are familiar and know of the work that they do. e.g. Vicar, Sunday School teacher, Jewish rabbi, Muslim imam or madrassa teacher, humanist celebrant. Arrange visits from some of these people so that children can meet them and ask questions.</p>	<p>Pathway 2: Expressing Beliefs</p> <p>Pathway 4: Personal journey</p>
<p>Compare and contrast characters from stories, including figures from the past</p> <p>ELG: Understand the past through settings,</p>	<p>Frequently share texts, images, and tell oral stories that help children begin to develop an understanding of the past and present. Feature fictional and non-fictional characters from a range of cultures, religions and times in storytelling, listen to what children say about them.</p> <p>Draw out common themes from stories, parables and fables such as bravery, difficult choices and kindness,</p>	<p>Pathway 2: Expressing Beliefs</p> <p>Pathway 6: The Big Picture</p>

<p>characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.</p>	<p>and talk about children’s experiences with these themes. In addition to storytelling, introduce characters, including those from the past, using songs, poems, puppets, role play and other storytelling methods.</p> <p>Begin to understand that some books and stories such as sacred texts are of particular importance to some people, that they contain guidance and rules for life, and are used and handled in special ways. Introduce simple stories from different religions and cultures so that children become familiar with them.</p>	
<p>Understand that some places are special to members of their community</p> <p>ELG: Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps;</p>	<p>Name and explain the purpose of places of worship and places of local importance to the community to children, drawing on their own experiences where possible.</p> <p>Take children to places of worship and places of local importance to the community. Explore these special places using all the senses.</p> <p>Invite visitors from different religious and cultural communities into the classroom to share their experiences with children.</p>	<p>Pathway 1: Nature of Religion and Belief</p>
<p>Recognise that people have different beliefs and celebrate special times in different ways</p> <p>ELG: Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;</p>	<p>Weave opportunities for children to engage with religious and cultural communities and their practices throughout the curriculum at appropriate times of the year. Help children begin to build a rich bank of vocabulary with which to describe their own lives and the lives of others.</p> <p>Develop knowledge of when celebrations occur by displaying a calendar of special events. Mark the special events relevant to children in the class. As appropriate, provide opportunity for children to explore and experience activities associated with festivals whilst being mindful of protocol and sensitivities. Provide opportunity for children to respond creatively to the celebration of festivals through art music, dance, writing.</p>	<p>Pathway 5: Influence and Authority</p>

<p>Explore the natural world around them</p> <p>ELG: Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants;</p>	<p>Encourage interactions with the outdoors to foster curiosity and give children freedom to touch, smell and hear the natural world around them during hands-on experiences.</p> <p>Create opportunities to discuss how we care for the natural world around us. Offer opportunities to sing songs and join in with rhymes and poems about the natural world.</p> <p>Hear and become familiar with stories, messages, actions and thoughts from different faith traditions about the natural world e.g. creation stories, stories about care for living things.</p>	<p>Pathway 6: The Big Picture</p>
<p>See themselves as a valuable individual</p> <p>ELG: Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly</p>	<p>Listen to stories and parables from different religious traditions as a starting point to think about and reflect on their own feelings and experiences. Draw out themes such as kindness, forgiveness, love.</p> <p>Use role-play and other activities to explore and become familiar with well-known stories. Talk about the words and actions of characters in religious and non-religious stories.</p>	<p>Pathway 3: Good Life</p>
<p>Express their feelings and consider the feelings of others</p> <p>ELG: Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly</p>	<p>Explore rules and the concept of right and wrong. Think about how their behaviour affects others.</p> <p>Use stories and real-life examples to explore behaviour and think about how people learn to live well together and make good choices.</p>	<p>Pathway 3: Good Life</p>
<p>Think about the perspectives of others</p> <p>ELG: Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.</p>	<p>Talk about some of the people who care for them, including friends and family.</p> <p>Talk about ways that people show love and concern for others and why this is important. Explore examples of how people help each other.</p> <p>Invite visitors from different religious and cultural communities into the classroom to talk about how they put their beliefs into practice by helping others.</p>	<p>Pathway 3: Good Life</p>

Key Stage 1

Teaching should be built around developing knowledge and understanding along the six pathways for learning. This should be linked to substantive knowledge about religions/worldviews. There is further detail of this content in Appendix 1 and in the non-statutory units of work.

The following descriptors are devised from the age-related statements in Book 2 of the Big Ideas for RE Project ([Putting Big Ideas into Practice in Religious Education](#), 2nd edition, 2022, pp.55-73). See also <https://bigideasforre.org/pos/>

Pathway 1

Through investigating the **Nature of Religion and Belief**, pupils should learn that:

- We are surrounded by distinctive things that are very important. Some of these are called 'precious', 'sacred' or 'holy'.
- People belonging to the same religion/worldview may have different 'holy' or important things and express their beliefs in different ways.

Teachers could teach this content through Core Unit C1.1 which includes:

- How people show they belong to a community, including using symbols and objects e.g. candles, prayer mats, murtis.
- Examples of what happens in different places of worship, including different denominations within Christianity.

Pathway 2

Through investigating **how Beliefs are Expressed**, pupils should learn that:

- People often give words different meanings when they are trying to express their priorities.
- Many people also use symbols to express these ideas.
- We need to interpret these words and symbols to find their meaning.

Teachers could teach this content through Core Unit C1.2 which includes:

- How people welcome a baby by giving meaningful gifts.
- How Christians, Muslims, Sikhs and Humanists welcome a baby by using special words and symbolic actions.
- How the choice of names for a baby can be important and meaningful for some people.

Pathway 3

Through investigating what is meant by a **Good Life**, pupils will learn that:

- Most religions/worldviews tell stories from the lives of exemplary people as inspiration about qualities and characteristics of a good life.
- They also teach about specific actions that are right and wrong and about good and bad attitudes.

Teachers could teach this content through Core Unit C1.3 and Focus Units F1.11, F1.12 and F1.15, which include:

- Examples of rules followed by different religions/worldviews.
- Moral stories and parables used by religions/worldviews to help people make choices.
- Examples of the way different religions/worldviews care for others.

Pathway 4

Through exploring what is meant by a **Personal Journey**, pupils will learn that:

- Some people have amazing, puzzling or mysterious experiences that make them ask big questions about life.
- There are many stories about people's experiences and encounters that have made them change their lives.

Teachers could teach this content through Core Unit C1.4 and Focus Unit F1.9 which include:

- Examples of how prayer helps some people make sense of life's experiences
- Why prayer is an important part of daily life for some people
- How people make decisions about how to live their lives e.g. caring for the environment.

Pathway 5

Through studying **Influence and Authority**, pupils should learn that:

- There is evidence of the influence of religions/worldviews on our community all around us.
- Religion does not influence everyone's life in the same way.

Teachers could teach this content through Core Unit C1.5 which includes:

- Examples of celebrations and traditions that can be both religious and cultural e.g Eid, Christmas, Diwali.
- Why people celebrate festivals in different ways – including religious and non-religious.

Pathway 6

Through considering the **Big Picture**, pupils should learn that:

- Human beings, including groups of religious people, tell stories that help them grapple with some of the big questions of life.
- Many of these stories are well-known as they have been handed down over generations.

Teachers could teach this content through Core Unit C1.6 and focus Units F1.11, F1.10 and F1.11 which include:

- Books and stories that are important or holy for some religions/worldviews.
- Stories that help people to make moral choices.
- Stories and teachings of religious leaders such as Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Guru Nanak.

Key Stage 2

Teaching should be built around developing knowledge and understanding along the six pathways for learning. This should be linked to substantive knowledge about religions/worldviews. There is further detail of this content in Appendix 1 and in the non-statutory units of work.

The following descriptors are devised from the age-related statements in Book 2 of the Big Ideas for RE Project ([Putting Big Ideas into Practice in Religious Education](#), 2nd edition, 2022, pp.55-73). See also <https://bigideasforre.org/pos/>

Pathway 1

Through investigating the **Nature of Religion and Belief**, pupils should learn that:

- The terms 'religion' or 'worldview' represent an overall approach to life including beliefs, practices, values and identity.
- Within each there is diversity in beliefs and practices.
- There are reasons why some aspects have stayed the same and others have changed.

Teachers could teach this content through Core Units CL2.1 and CU2.1 which include:

- Examples of different religions/ worldviews found locally and nationally, including practices and places of worship.
- Exploration of what religions/worldviews believe about God and how this affects their practices.

Pathway 2

Through investigating **how Beliefs are Expressed**, pupils should learn that:

- People often express their feelings and beliefs through art, music, poetry, story, drama and physical movement.
- These creative forms of expression also play important roles in most religions and cultures.

Teachers could teach this content through Core Units CL2.2, CU2.2 and Focus Unit FU2.13 which include:

- How religions/worldviews use art, dance, pattern, poetry and music to express belief in creative ways E.g. Islamic pattern, Sikh kirtan, Christian icons.
- How religions/worldviews use symbols and actions to express beliefs e.g. in Sikhi – wearing the 5Ks and taking Amrit; Hindu 'Aum'.

Pathway 3

Through investigating what is meant by a **Good Life**, pupils will learn that:

- Most religions share stories of moral exemplars from the past and more recently, guiding followers on leading virtuous lives.
- Religions/worldviews provide guidance for their followers on how to live a good life.
- There are both differing opinions and agreement on what is meant by a 'good life' and what is right and wrong.

Teachers could teach this content through Core Units CL2.3, CU2.3 and Focus Units FL2.12, FU2.12 which include:

- How religions/worldviews help people to make moral choices e.g 5 pillars of Islam.
- Examples of codes for living followed by religions/worldviews e.g. Hindu Dharma.
- How the lives of leaders such as Moses, Jesus and Mohammed act as examples for religious believers.

Pathway 4

Through exploring what is meant by a **Personal Journey**, pupils will learn that:

- Some people have amazing, puzzling or mysterious experiences that they may explain as an encounter with a power above
- They may see these as beyond or within the material world and may claim they have given new insights into life.

Teachers could teach this content through Core Units CL2.4, CU2.4 and Focus Unit FU2.14 which include:

- Mysterious and life-changing encounters such as Guru Nanak's enlightenment.
- How pilgrimages can be life-changing for some people.
- How people gain new insights into life e.g Buddhist meditation and the life of the Buddha.

Pathway 5

Through studying **Influence and Authority**, pupils should learn that:

- Communities worldwide are shaped by traditional beliefs from religions/worldviews.
- Some are influenced by a single source and others by many.
- In some communities, the influence of a religion/worldview is largely limited to its followers.

Teachers could teach this content through Core Units CL2.5, CU2.5 and Focus Unit FL2.13 which include:

- Festivals and celebrations evident in worldwide religions/worldviews e.g Passover, Diwali, Christmas.
- Religious aspects of celebration e.g. Holy week, Hajj.
- Secular/cultural approaches to celebrations e.g Friday night dinner.

Pathway 6

Through considering the **Big Picture**, pupils should learn that:

- People tell different stories to communicate important teachings and these stories often form part of longer narratives.
- Groups of religious and non-religious people tell different stories, which reflect the different ways in which they view the world.

Teachers could teach this content through Core Units CL2.6, CU2.6 and Focus Units FL2.11, FL2.14, FU2.11 which include:

- Covenant stories linked to celebrations in Judaism e.g. Passover.
- Stories used in Holy Week and beyond to explain the significance of the life of Jesus.
- Creation/origin stories in Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hindu Dharma and Sikhi.

Key Stage 3

Teaching should be built around developing knowledge and understanding along the six pathways for learning. This should be linked to substantive knowledge about religions/worldviews. There is further detail of this content in Appendix 1 and in the non-statutory units of work.

The following descriptors are devised from the age-related statements in Book 2 of the Big Ideas for RE Project ([Putting Big Ideas into Practice in Religious Education](#), 2nd edition, 2022, pp.55-73). See also <https://bigideasforre.org/pos/>

Pathway 1

Through investigating the **Nature of Religion and Belief**, students should learn that:

- Religions/worldviews involve interconnected patterns of beliefs, practices and values.
- There are important differences but also close connections between some of them.
- Many of these similarities and differences relate to their history and changing cultural context.

Teachers could teach this content through Core Units C3.1, C3.2 and Focus Unit F3.11 which include:

- Personal worldviews which accept parts of the institutional view while rejecting others.
- Different geographical/contextual expressions and interpretations of religion such as Theravada Buddhism in Sri Lanka or Zen Buddhism in Japan.
- The reality of Hindu lived experience in Britain compared with India and the USA.

Pathway 2

Through investigating **how Beliefs are Expressed**, students should learn that:

- People convey their beliefs, values, commitments and identities in a range of ways.
- They can also be interpreted differently, with some regarding them as divinely inspired.

Teachers could teach this content through Core Unit 3.3 and Focus Units F3.11, F3.12 and F3.14, which include:

- Liturgical and non-liturgical expressions of Christian worship.
- Pure Land Buddhism and the centrality of Amitabha Buddha.
- Weddings and ceremonies across different traditions and worldviews e.g. Islam, Judaism and Humanism.

Pathway 3

Through investigating what is meant by a **Good Life**, students will learn that:

- Many of the rules of religions/worldviews are very old and may need interpretation before they can be applied today.
- Some religions/worldviews distinguish between rules revealed by God and those developed through human reason or customs and traditions. This matters because people need to know the origin of a 'rule' before deciding how far it can be changed.
- All our moral actions have consequences for ourselves and others. Some believe that the consequences extend beyond this life.

Teachers could teach this content through Core Units 3.4, C3.5 and Focus Unit F3.16, which include:

- Religion in relation to community cohesion (how it contributes to it and the challenges it brings).
- The Qur'an as a guide to living a good life.
- The importance of Sewa in Sikhi.

Pathway 4

Through exploring what is meant by a **Personal Journey**, students will learn that:

- People find deep meaning in mystical, religious, or spiritual moments. Rituals connect them to the divine and each other.
- Some believe key individuals have had extraordinary insights.
- Some believe human beings have a spiritual dimension which may or may not be religious. Others deny humans have a spiritual nature, believing that a human being is a complex, highly evolved animal.

Teachers could teach this content through Core Unit C3.6 and Focus Units F3.12, F3.13, which include:

- Key transformative experiences such as those of Guru Nanak, St Paul or Moses.
- Important rituals that mark important points in life such as marriage or death ceremonies.
- Extraordinary experience suggesting the existence of an afterlife.

Pathway 5

Through studying **Influence and Authority**, students should learn that:

- Religions/worldviews are influential at individual, local, national and global levels.
- They will exert different levels of influence in different places and at different times.

Teachers could teach this content through Core Unit C3.7 and Focus Unit 3.14, which include:

- Religion and the way it has impacted society concerning gender and sexuality over time.
- The authority of religious leaders in the Church.
- Christianity and the realisation of the Kingdom of God.

Pathway 6

Through considering the **Big Picture**, students should learn that:

- Many religions/worldviews provide a coherent account (or 'grand narrative') of what the universe is like and why it is as it is.
- For many religious people the most important source of this lies in sacred texts, often believed to have been divinely inspired.
- Other people believe that science and reason can explain everything and that there is no need for religious explanations.

Teachers could teach this content through Core Unit C3.8 and Focus Units F3.13, F3.15, which include:

- The existence of evil and how this impacts an individual's worldview.
- The possibility of the afterlife and the soul from a religious and scientific perspective.
- Buddhist responses to the reality and nature of existence.

Key Stage 4

Teaching should be built around developing knowledge and understanding along the six pathways for learning. This should be linked to substantive knowledge about religions/worldviews. There is further detail of this content in Appendix 1 and in the non-statutory units of work.

The following descriptors are devised from the age-related statements in Book 2 of the Big Ideas for RE Project ([Putting Big Ideas into Practice in Religious Education](#), 2nd edition, 2022, pp.55-73). See also <https://bigideasforre.org/pos/>

Pathway 1

Through investigating the **Nature of Religion and Belief**, students should learn that:

- There is no consensus on the meaning of the word 'religion' or 'worldview'.
- Both religious and nonreligious worldviews have faced challenges from a range of moral, philosophical, political and social issues.

Teachers could teach this content through Units 4.10 and 4.13 which include:

- Diversity of thought, belief and practices within Christianity such as the Quakers and the Church of Latter-Day Saints.
- Diversity of thought, belief and practices within Islam such as Sufism and the Ahmadiyya school of thought.

Pathway 2

Through investigating **how Beliefs are Expressed**, students should learn that:

- It is very difficult to describe metaphysical or abstract concepts using everyday language, so people have attempted to express these in 'religious language', metaphor and analogy.
- Artists and musicians have created works to express views on moral or religious issues.
- People of all beliefs and none can be moved by creative works with a religious message but will interpret them very differently.
- In more recent times, people are able to explore traditions other than their own.

Teachers could teach this content through Unit 4.7, 4.10 which include:

- The methods Christians use to tackle extremism.
- The way in which Buddhists respond to violent actions.
- The significance of Ramadan for the Muslim community.

Pathway 3

Through investigating what is meant by a **Good Life**, students will learn that:

- There are agreements and disagreements on moral issues within and between religious and non-religious groups.
- Religious and non-religious organisations have tried to identify universal rules and principles. These often contain teachings about the character and virtues needed to lead a 'good' life.
- Some religions/worldviews have different expectations for different groups of people.

Teachers could teach this content through Units 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, and 4.8, which include:

- The arguments Hindus and Christians use to justify the sanctity of life.
- The nature of pacifism and how people work around the world to support peaceful objectives.
- The way that Christians, Muslims and Hindus approach modern ethical challenges like animal testing, genetic engineering and the use of AI.

Pathway 4

Through exploring what is meant by a **Personal Journey**, students will learn that:

- Consciousness is seen by some as uniquely human, linked to a sense of spirituality.
- Spirituality can be viewed as an inner, personal aspect, separate from traditional religion.
- Not everyone identifies with religion or spirituality, but group membership can enhance awareness and bring transformation.

Teachers could teach this content through Units 4.4, which include:

- The different views on enlightenment across the dharmic faiths.
- The methods that the dharmic faiths use to access enlightenment.

Pathway 5

Through studying **Influence and Authority**, students should learn that:

- Religions/worldviews impact diverse aspects of life with varying degrees of influence.
- Influence often aligns with the power exercised by a religion.
- Authoritative elements can justify actions with outcomes ranging from positive change to increased intolerance and violence.

Teachers could teach this content through Units 4.6, 4.9, which include:

- The role that the Church of England plays in British constitutional arrangements.
- How charitable organisations work to support human rights around the world.
- The balance of the right to freedom of religion vs the right to free speech or freedom from discrimination.

Pathway 6

Through considering the **Big Picture**, students should learn that:

- Religions/worldviews often create a 'grand narrative' explaining the nature of God, humans, and the universe.
- Narratives claim authority, yet within traditions, these beliefs vary.
- Some reconcile science and religion, while others see them as mutually exclusive.

Teachers could teach this content through Units 4.1, 4.13, which include:

- The methods Christians use to describe truth.
- The way that religious practices can develop spirituality.
- How conscience is important to moral decision making.

Key Stage 5 (Sixth Form)

By law, RE should be included in the curriculum for every sixth form student in maintained schools. Some students will opt for A and AS level courses in Religious Studies or Philosophy. For others there are excellent educational reasons for including RE post 16, quite apart from the demands of statutory compliance. Elements of RE will support the development of cultural literacy and critical thinking on contemporary issues. The subject will build essential skills, enhancing personal development as well as academic competence in all subjects.

These skills include:

- Research: nurturing the ability to research, evaluate and report independently.
- Critical thinking: generating independent and critical thinking skills, enabling students to reach informed and balanced views, recognising there are different possible conclusions.
- Presentation: building the confidence and expertise to present information clearly and informatively.
- Reflection: engendering the aptitude and skill to reflect on learning, to question oneself, to change a personal view or to learn from the experience of self or others.
- Awareness: developing an understanding of how personal study links with the contemporary world, its struggles, celebrations and challenges – how it's relevant to the world around us.

Some schools may choose to deliver core RE through a wider programme of SMSC and citizenship. When planned in this way, RE can support personal development of students, nurture their SMSC development and contribute to wider academic goals. Such a programme may include a range of questions related to the impact of religion in society. Some may be specific topics, such as exploring where religious practice sometimes conflicts with secular goals of equality. Others may be a general topic that can include a religious perspective, such as sustainability and the environment.

However, it is strongly advised that such a programme is constructed with careful integrity and depth, with the guidance and direction of a specialist in RE. This avoids ineffective tokenism and recognises the importance of students continuing to learn about the part faith plays in a diverse world beyond the age of 16.

Some topics offer opportunities for wide-ranging learning, discussion and experience. For example, a study on the theme of food could explore a range of cultural, ethical and religious topics, such as: animal welfare and factory farming; dietary rules; vegetarianism; restraint and healthy eating.

Examples of how this might be done are included in the full licensed syllabus. Each exemplar could be taken as an individual unit or could be adapted to meet the needs of a specific programme. Each core question is supplemented by further questions. Some of these may be given a greater emphasis while some may be explored more briefly.

RE and Special Educational Needs

All children and young people are entitled to an appropriate education, one that is appropriate to their needs, promotes high standards and the fulfilment of potential. This should enable them to:

- *achieve their best*
- *become confident individuals living fulfilling lives, and*
- *make a successful transition into adulthood*

(SEND code of practice 2015)

'Sustainable learning can occur only when there is meaningful engagement. The process of engagement is a journey which connects a child and their environment (including people, ideas, materials, and concepts) to enable learning and achievement.'

(Carpenter et al, 2011)

In Religious Education, as with all curriculum subjects, **good teaching for pupils with SEND is good teaching for all**. Teachers are skilled in adapting their teaching to the needs of learners. Good RE is informed by knowledge of and engagement with pupils as individuals, taking account of emotional and learning needs as well as religious and cultural backgrounds.

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) groups needs into four broad areas to support schools to plan the provision that they offer:

- cognition and learning
- communication and interaction
- social, emotional, and mental health
- sensory and physical needs.

Strategies that can be used to make RE more accessible to pupils with SEND in mainstream schools include:

- Giving pupils first-hand experiences, for example, inviting visitors into school, visits to places of worship and taking part in celebrating festivals.
- Organising activities to give personal experiences which can include dance, drama and visits to a range of environments.
- Using sensory materials and resources through sight, touch, sound, taste or smell. These can include music, use of tactile artefacts or engaging pupils in visiting a sensory garden.
- Using a wide range of communication strategies in lessons to suit different personalities, including active and creative approaches and quieter, more reflective activities.
- Paying attention to the layout of displays so that information is clear but not overwhelming.
- Helping pupils to understand and appreciate their world and its diversity.
- Use IT to increase pupils' knowledge of religions and elements in them.

The first three are particularly important when working with children with semantic pragmatic difficulties or those who struggle with abstract concepts, such as children on the autism spectrum.

Religious Education in Special Schools

Special schools have a legal requirement to provide Religious Education 'so far as is practicable' (School Standards and Framework Act 1998 section 71 (7)). The local agreed syllabus will need to be adapted to suit the needs and abilities of pupils.

Pupils and students within National Curriculum ranges will be able to access lessons based on the RE syllabus. The teacher may need to look at an earlier key stage for learning objectives, but this should always be in consultation with colleagues and taking into account the whole school scheme of work, to ensure there is adequate progression through the time pupils are in the school.

For pupils working at Pre-Key Stage Standards, content from the local agreed syllabus may be adapted to suit the needs of learners and taught as a discrete subject. Many aspects of religious education could be included within cross curricular planning alongside other subjects, e.g. music, drama, history and PSHE. There may be a greater focus on sensory experiences and activities rather than written tasks.

Pupils and students who have Complex Multiple Learning Needs will be supported and assessed using the Engagement Model. Pupils may be introduced to content from the RE syllabus through the 5 areas of engagement: exploration, realisation, anticipation, persistence and initiation. This child-centred model is focused on the individual responses of pupils; the multi-sensory and experiential aspects of the RE curriculum may be used imaginatively to provide worthwhile and relevant learning using artefacts, visits and other relevant experiences.

Assessment and End of Key Stage Statements

Assessment in RE should be manageable and systematic, in line with school assessment practices in other foundation subjects. Assessment of pupils' skills and knowledge will be against the school's own curriculum design. It is important to note that assessment in RE should be based on clear understanding of what pupils are learning and how they are learning on a day-to-day basis.

Day-to-day formative assessment should build a picture of pupil's:

- Substantive knowledge – what do they know/understand?
- Disciplinary knowledge – what skills have they learned?
- Personal knowledge – expressing ideas about how the RE has shaped them

Each unit of work developed, because of careful curriculum planning, should allow pupils to make progress through these key stages of Remembering, Understanding, Applying, Analysing, Evaluating and Creating.

The journey through a unit of work for pupils and students



As pupils progress through these stages in a unit of work, the teacher can then make a summative assessment at the end of the unit. In the exemplar planning that supports the syllabus, we have used a mastery model including the Expected standard, Working towards the expected standard and Working deeper within the expected standard. This can then be used as a model to report on progress and achievement for the next teacher/ key stage.

The table below outlines the skills and key outcomes required to achieve the end of key stage expectations. This may be helpful in assessing progress and to support teachers in developing learning objectives. Each sentence stem needs to be applied to a particular task or knowledge content.

Key outcomes to support assessment for Remembering, Understanding, Applying, Analysing, Evaluating and Creating.

	Remembering	Understanding	Applying	Analysing	Evaluating	Creating
KS1	Recognise Name Talk about	Retell Notice details	Express ideas Respond sensitively	Sort Respond to questions	Suggest meanings Recognise similarities and differences	Teachers may use the following stems at any stage to assess age-appropriate outcomes: Create an object or picture to show understanding Design and make using new/learned ideas. Plan and produce an outcome to demonstrate learning. Generate and synthesise ideas as part of a project.
LKS2	Recall information Describe Re-tell Recognise	Give an example Make links Respond thoughtfully	Ask questions Give a presentation Express ideas	Demonstrate understanding Give reasons Explain	Describe similarities and differences Give opinions	
UKS2	Define Describe and give examples Identify and explain	Summarise ideas Compare and contrast Make connections Discuss	Choose appropriate questions (e.g an interview) Give a considered response Apply ideas	Explain a range of opinions Organise material (e.g most relevant) Find meanings	Weigh up different points of view Give reasons for differences	
KS3	Explain and interpret a range of views	Show coherent understanding of and appraise reasons	Enquire into differences and explain how and why they are different,	Evaluate and analyse,	Explore and express insights, Make a judgement	
KS4	Research and interpret texts and sources...	Investigate and explain different interpretations	Investigate and evaluate....	Analyse forms of ... Analyse the influence of	Examine and critically evaluate varied perspectives	

End of Key Stage Statements adapted from the Big Ideas Framework

The following End of Key Stage Statements help schools to assess the pupils working at the Expected Standard in each of the pathways and for their year group. The following statements are taken from Wintersgill, B; Cush, D; Francis, D. (2019, 2nd edition 2022). *Putting Big Ideas into Practice in Religious Education*, pp.74-76. Available from <https://bigideasforre.org/Big-Ideas-Publications/>

Key Stage 1	Nature of Religion and Belief	Expressing Beliefs	A Good Life	Personal Journey	Influence and Authority	The Big Picture
Pupils:	Can tell the difference between ordinary everyday things and things that some 'people call 'sacred', 'holy' or 'special'. Understand that many people belong to religions/worldviews, each of which has their 'holy' or 'special' things, which are set apart by the way they are treated and what people connect them with.	Can recognise that people sometimes give different meanings to words when they are writing about their religious beliefs and feelings. Can suggest different possible meanings for stories, symbols, art and music that people have created to express their beliefs.	Can identify characteristics in the lives of people who are held as examples by religions/worldviews. Can identify and suggest meanings for the teachings about right and wrong from different religions/worldviews.	Can give examples of amazing, puzzling or mysterious experiences that make people wonder at the world and ask big questions about life. Can retell a story about someone whose experience or encounter changed their life.	Can identify evidence of religions/worldviews in their community. They understand that religions/worldviews do not have the same importance for all people and all places.	Can identify some of the big questions that people might ask about life and can explain how some favourite stories, including stories from religions/worldviews, might help people answer these questions. Can tell the difference between contemporary stories and stories that have become traditional because they have been handed down for hundreds or thousands of years.

	Nature of Religion and Belief	Expressing Beliefs	A Good Life	Personal Journey	Influence and Authority	The Big Picture
Lower Key Stage 2 Pupils:	Can identify some shared characteristics of some religions e.g. Creator God. Beginning to recognise different traditions within religions/worldviews.	Can describe and explain how some people express their feelings through art, music and dance. Can give examples of music, art and dance from different traditions.	Know some role models/ leaders of religions and worldviews. Know how values of right and wrong are shared across different religions/worldviews.	Can give examples of amazing, puzzling or mysterious experiences from a wider range of religions/worldviews. Can compare stories about people whose experience or encounter changed their lives.	Explain how and why festivals and seasons are celebrated and how these may be celebrated in different countries.	Recall stories from different traditions and explain how these affect people's lives.
Upper Key Stage 2 Pupils:	Identify shared characteristics of religions. They explain how within each religious tradition these characteristics might be connected to each other. They recognise that each religion/worldview is made up of several groups of people and can compare some of the different beliefs and practices.	Can show how people often express their feelings and beliefs through art, music, poetry, story, drama and physical movement and that these have been important in most religions and culture.	Explain how certain people who are regarded as role models put their teachings and values into practice. They compare some of the different opinions held by people from different religious and non-religious groups about what is right and wrong, and about what is desirable in life.	Explain how some people have amazing, puzzling or mysterious experiences that make them ask big questions about life and, in some cases, have made them change their lives or given them new insights to share with others.	Give examples to show how communities are influenced by their traditional religions/worldviews. They understand that different religions/worldviews, in different combinations, are influential in different countries.	Explain how people from different religions/worldviews express what they understand about the world through stories.

	Nature of Religion and Belief	Expressing Beliefs	A Good Life	Personal Journey	Influence and Authority	The Big Picture
Key Stage 3 Students:	<p>Understand that religion is a world-wide phenomenon. They explain why in some ways each religion/worldview is quite different while in other ways there are close connections between some of them.</p> <p>They understand that religions/worldviews are made up of smaller groups which are alike in some ways and very different in others.</p>	<p>Show how people communicate complex ideas using many media. They account for the fact that people have different opinions about whether the arts have a place within religion.</p> <p>Suggest interpretations of selected expressions of faith and belief.</p>	<p>Explain why people have different opinions about what it means to live a good life.</p> <p>Compare guidance for living found in different religions/worldviews and can show how different consequences can follow from different moral decisions.</p>	<p>Compare experiences that people have had, which they thought of as 'mystical', 'religious', 'spiritual' or 'peak' experiences. They compare different meanings for 'spirituality' and different opinions about its importance in people's lives.</p>	<p>Compare the influence of religions/worldviews in different contexts; individual, local, national and global.</p> <p>Demonstrate understanding of the influence of one or two religions/worldviews in different places and at different times.</p>	<p>Compare the view of the universe in contrasting grand narratives. They are able to explain the difference between scientific and traditional narratives and that there are different views on whether these can be compatible.</p> <p>Are able to explain that there are different ways of understanding the claims of religious texts.</p>

	Nature of Religion and Belief	Expressing Beliefs	A Good Life	Personal Journey	Influence and Authority	The Big Picture
<p>Key Stage 4 and 5</p> <p>Students:</p>	<p>Understand that the word 'religion' means different things to different people and that it is often hard to say what is 'religious' and what is not.</p> <p>Suggest ways in which religions/worldviews are both similar and different. They understand the importance of recognising that religions/worldviews are diverse and that they respond in different ways to contemporary global, political and social issues.</p>	<p>Distinguish what makes 'religious language' different.</p> <p>Understand why the ability to interpret non-verbal forms of religious expression and its importance for religions can be valuable for all people today.</p>	<p>Consider different theories about how and why humans ought to live a good life. They show awareness that religious and non-religious groups agree on some moral issues and disagree on others, both across and within religions/worldviews.</p> <p>Understand that people may argue that there are some moral rules that should apply universally, or that some rules only apply to some groups of people in particular circumstances.</p>	<p>Compare religious and non-religious understandings of 'spirituality'.</p> <p>Understand why many people today prefer to be thought of as spiritual rather than religious while others do not want to be thought of as either.</p> <p>Understand why many people like belonging to groups that share their beliefs and values. Understand that joining a group can affect a person's sense of identity and bring about a transformation in their lives.</p>	<p>Make links between ideas in religions/worldviews and certain social and political actions.</p> <p>Compare the use of power by different religious and non-religious groups, which have resulted in social improvement or intolerance and violence.</p>	<p>Compare different interpretations of a grand narrative from within a religion/worldview. They are able to explain the difference between scientific and traditional narratives, and the relevance of different literary forms.</p> <p>Compare the views of members of a religion who believe that their narrative is compatible with scientific accounts and those who do not and explain reasons for this difference of opinion.</p>

Creating an RE Curriculum

Using the exemplar units of work

Summaries of the core units of work from KS1-3 can be found in the full licensed syllabus. These include component questions, assessment outcomes and pathway links. The Detailed Planning Folder contains detailed planning for all the core and focus units of work. These are listed from page 54. Taken together these units would fulfil the requirements of the syllabus and offer a broad and balanced entitlement to RE. Some of these could be delivered as cross-curricular units of work. Schools are not required to use these; they are free to adapt them or to develop their own units of work as an alternative.

Many of the units can be studied through a variety of religions/worldviews. In the interests of progression of knowledge and skills for all pupils, schools should note the guidance given about the balance of religions/worldviews and pathway concepts at each key stage. Curriculum planning should ensure depth and breadth over time rather than covering too many religions/worldviews in a single unit, especially in the earlier key stages.

Constructing a curriculum

Schools are encouraged to develop their own RE curriculum, selecting units of work to create a balance of the subject content outlined in this syllabus. Content should be carefully sequenced to build breadth and depth of knowledge as pupils progress through the key stages following the pathways. The RE curriculum should enable pupils to develop substantive, disciplinary and personal knowledge. Schools may also wish to write their own units or adapt and develop those provided.

General principles

A good curriculum will ensure that there is both depth of study (some areas investigated in detail) and breadth (an overall general understanding of the faiths and related philosophical and ethical questions). This is more important than including every individual phrase in the content tables.

Great care should be taken to ensure any planning and resources used to teach this content are appropriate in terms of learning content, quality and sensitivity. If teachers use ready-made materials, they should be checked thoroughly to satisfy these requirements. As well as general sensitivity, teachers should be aware of specific religious issues that may cause controversy or conflict. While it is right that RE should provide a place of safety and integrity to explore difficult and sensitive issues, teaching must always be informed by professional judgment, empathy and awareness, particularly in the use of resources. For example, for Muslims, it is seen as an insult to depict the Prophet Muhammad in pictorial form. For Muslims, Jews and some Christians it is wrong to draw a representation of God who is seen as transcendent. Teachers or senior leaders who have any doubts, concerns or questions are welcome to contact their local RE adviser.

A school's RE curriculum must be built around progression of learning in all of the six pathways upon which the syllabus is based. Within these pathways, the programme of study must enable pupils to accumulate sufficient knowledge of the religions and worldviews studied. This will enable them to have a broad general understanding of these, enriched and extended by deeper exploration of selected aspects.

Appendices 1 and 2 summarise the main areas that would need to be studied for a comprehensive understanding of the different faiths and beliefs. In constructing the curriculum, schools need not cover every aspect outlined here but should include sufficient material to ensure robust understanding. This selection may also reflect the context of the school community and should:

- Be cumulatively sufficient.
- Enable development of transferable skills and understanding.
- Reflect the local context.

Diversity

It is important to remember that 'faiths' are not monolithic and uniform systems of belief. There is huge variety within and between different branches and approaches. Recognition of this is crucial to effective teaching and learning.

It is also critical to recognise that there are many other faiths and systems of belief besides Christianity and the other religions/worldviews specifically identified in RE curriculum guidance. Schools should recognise and acknowledge this diversity. The purpose of RE is not to restrict study to an authorised and official collection of religions.

Schools are required to include other worldviews throughout the study of RE. This recognises the need to enable all learners to explore questions of meaning, purpose and value. This is important from a perspective of faith or non-religious understanding and recognises that most people do not adhere to formal religious structures.

Other worldviews include beliefs, arguments or philosophies that approach questions of meaning and purpose without reference to belief in a deity. This may include a structured, named philosophy such as Humanism, or a more general argument or approach relevant to the questions studied.

Enquiry and Investigation

Enquiry and investigation should be at the heart of learning in RE. Schools which decide to write a unit should focus on a key question related to the knowledge content of the syllabus and linked to one or more of the pathways. Enquiry models such as 'Philosophy for Children', or 'Community of Enquiry' can be applied to these questions to engage pupils in their own learning and develop critical and dialogical skills.

Enquiry questions should be sufficiently focused and appropriate for study in RE. They should:

- Be clearly accessible to the age of the pupils and enable them to join in the process of deciding what the question means and how it might be investigated.
- Generally, only include new language which relates to the direct object of study.
- Be 'big' questions that take the pupils to the heart of the subject and are of long-standing significance.
- Enable pupils to see a learning journey and identify how any topic is building on previous learning and advancing their progress in the subject.

A Model for Enquiry

One enquiry model used in many exemplar units of work follows a three-part enquiry.

Analyse the question

Explore the issues and human experience involved in the question. What do we know? What are the issues? All units start from concepts understood by pupils. For young children this will mean focusing on practical ideas that can later be applied to thinking and religious questions. For all pupils it will involve considering practical and meaningful issues around the key question (unit title) as a starting point for the main content of the unit.

Investigate the relevant beliefs, practices and ways of life

Investigate beliefs and values from the chosen religions/worldview(s), evaluating different perspectives and responses to the key question. There is no need to cover multiple religions/worldviews in a single unit, as long as the curriculum as a whole provides a balance of religions/worldviews across the pathways over the course of each key stage. Remember to acknowledge variation between and within traditions. What do people believe? Which religious texts, stories or traditions are relevant? What do they do? How do they celebrate? What difference does it all make?

Offer reasoned and critical responses

Assemble, evaluate and explain possible conclusions and express a considered personal response to the question. The concluding lesson(s) enable pupils to consider and apply some of the concepts learned. Are there elements of personal reflection to gain from this unit? Can the transferable question be applied and linked to previous learning? This opportunity to develop personal knowledge is critical for all pupils, not only those from a religious tradition. For example, pathway concepts such as 'personal journey' or 'living a good life' can be applied in a secular or religious way.

Planning a unit of work

Here are five steps in planning a unit of work, based on an enquiry and investigation into a key question:

1. Choose the key question

This is the 'composite' question and should be based on one or more of the pathways and should be linked to the knowledge content in the relevant key stage. See the curriculum information from page 21. Look at the examples of learning linked to pathways in Appendix 1 for suggestions about how to develop key questions within each pathway.

2. Look at the learning outcomes

The aim of the unit is for pupils to be able to answer the key question like a 'good RE student'. Choose content that will address the end of key stage pathway statements (page 41) for the appropriate key stage.

3. Compile component questions within each part of the enquiry cycle

These help to construct the overall composite enquiry. Group these within each of the three elements of enquiry.

- *Analyse: What is the question about?*
- *Investigate: What are the relevant beliefs and practices?*
- *Apply and reflect: What responses can be made?*

4. Write learning objectives to fit the component questions

These component questions inform the learning objectives for sections within the scheme of work, building towards a creative, assessable task towards the end of the unit to demonstrate understanding. Use sentence starters from the skills progression grid for the appropriate key stage to ensure that objectives are assessable and observable.

5. Devise learning activities

Devise age-appropriate activities to answer each component question. Use the knowledge content grids in the appendices to select age-appropriate content about religions/worldviews. Include tasks that support remembering, understanding, applying, analysing, evaluating and creating. It is not necessary for each element to follow another in a strict order; they may be woven into the pattern in different ways. The important thing is for the learning to include all elements during the course of the unit to balance the retention of knowledge with critical thinking and personal reflection. The learning activities should support the learning objectives and the overall aims of the unit. It would be useful to provide an initial stimulus at the beginning of the unit to engage the pupils in the new unit.

Cross curricular opportunities

Many schools use cross curricular units of work to fulfil programmes of study. Much of the subject content outlined in this syllabus may be delivered in this way, always ensuring that the aims and content, including the six pathways, are delivered comprehensively and with integrity. Some aspects of the syllabus will still need some discrete RE time, such as a study of a particular world faith.

Exemplar Units of Work

Alongside the syllabus there is a wide range of detailed units of work. These are not statutory but, taken together, they will fulfil syllabus requirements. It is expected that schools designing their curriculum choose three core units of work and one or two focus units per year group. However, schools are encouraged to develop their own curriculum based on the statutory requirements and other guidance in this syllabus. The exemplar units of work may be used, adapted or supplemented as appropriate.

Schools can subscribe to the planning folder with **online access to all the units of work** and resources. For more information about access please contact business.solutions@kirklees.gov.uk

Also in development is a **comprehensive package of additional resources** including PowerPoint presentations and knowledge organisers. These will allow schools to access expert locally produced materials that have been especially written just for this syllabus. These can be confidently used 'off-the-peg' or adapted for their own preferences. These resources will be available by an economical additional subscription; to enquire, email enquiries@penninelearning.com.

Schools are also free to use other resources which support or enhance the teaching of RE with this syllabus, such as the 'Understanding Christianity' units and other resources produced by RE Today Services Ltd and also exemplar planning from the [Big Ideas website](#). However, they are advised to be careful in their selection.

Core and Focus Units of Work

Early Years and Foundation Stage

There are no specific core and focus units in EYFS as the units will be taught across the year and through provision.

E.1 Which places are special to members of our community? (Pathway 1)

E.2 Why are some objects special? (Pathway 2)

E.3 Who cares for me and how do I help others? (Pathway 3)

E.4 Who belongs in my family and community? (Pathway 4)

E.5 How do people celebrate special times? (Pathway 5)

E.6 How do we understand and care for the world? (Pathway 6)

Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2)

Core Units

C1.1 What does it mean to belong a community of belief? (Pathway 1)

C1.2 How are symbols used to welcome new life? (Pathway 2)

C1.3 How can we make good choices? (Pathway 3)

C1.4 How and why do some people pray? (Pathway 4)

C1.5 Why are festivals important in a community? (Pathway 5)

C1.6 Which books and stories are important? (Pathway 6)

Focus Units

F1.11 How do Hindu Stories help believers live their lives? (Pathways 3 and 6)

F1.12 How and why do we care for others? (Pathway 3)

F1.13 What do religions/worldviews say about our wonderful world? (Pathways 4 and 6)

F1.14 How do Bible stories show that God keeps promises? (Pathway 6)

F1.15 What did Jesus teach and how did he live? (Pathways 3 and 6)

Lower Key Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4)

Core Units

CL2.1 What faiths and beliefs can be found in our country and community? (Pathway 1)

CL2.2 How do different people express their spirituality? (Pathway 2)

CL2.3 How do the 5 pillars help Muslims to lead a good life? (Pathway 3)

CL2.4 Why do the lives of the Gurus inspire Sikh believers? (Pathway 4)

CL2.5 How do ancient stories influence modern celebrations? (Pathway 5)

CL2.6 How do Jews use stories to remember God's covenant? (Pathway 6)

Focus Units

FL2.11 How do creation stories help people understand the world? (Pathway 6)

FL2.12 How does the Bible help Christians to live a good life? (Pathway 3)

FL2.13 Why do people follow inspirational leaders? (Pathways 3 and 5)

FL2.14 How are the stories of Holy Week important to Christians? (Pathway 6)

Upper Key Stage 2 (Years 5 and 6)

Core Units

- CU2.1 What do Hindu people believe about God? (Pathway 1)
- CU2.2 How do Sikhs symbolise their commitment? (Pathway 2)
- CU2.3 What values do people live by? (Pathway 3)
- CU2.4 Why do some people go on pilgrimage? (Pathway 4)
- CU2.5 How and why are Jewish festivals celebrated today? (Pathway 5)
- CU2.6 What do Christians believe about the old and new covenants? (Pathway 6)

Focus Units

- FU2.11 What is the significance of Easter, Ascension and Pentecost? (Pathway 6)
- FU2.12 Should we forgive others? (Pathway 3)
- FU2.13 Why are rites of passage important? (Pathways 2 and 4)
- FU2.14 How do Buddhists live a meaningful life? (Pathways 1 and 4)

Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8 and 9)

Core Units

As KS3 covers three years, there are eight units and some pathways are covered more than once.

- C3.1 What is religion? (Pathway 1)
- C3.2 How do Hindus see life? (Pathway 1)
- C3.3 How do Christians worship in diverse ways? (Pathway 2)
- C3.4 What does it mean to live in multi faith Britain? (Pathway 3)
- C3.5 What do Muslims believe about a good life? (Pathway 3)
- C3.6 Can spiritual experience be transformative? (Pathway 4)
- C3.7 Does religion promote or prevent equality? (Pathway 5)
- C3.8 How do beliefs grapple with evil and suffering? (Pathway 6)

Focus Units

- F3.11 How do Buddhists express their beliefs in different ways? (Pathways 1 and 2)
- F3.12 What is marriage and how is it celebrated? (Pathways 4 and 2)
- F3.13 Do humans have a soul? (Pathways 6 and 4)
- F3.14 How do Christians see the Kingdom of God? (Pathways 5 and 2)
- F3.15 Should human beings use animals? (Pathway 3)
- F3.16 What do Jews and Sikhs believe about charity and service? (Pathway 3)

Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11)

At KS4 a variety of options are provided for non-examined students providing material for a coherent course of RE.

- 4.1 What is meant by truth and spirituality (Pathway 6)
- 4.2 What does it mean to say that life has value? (Pathways 3 and 4)
- 4.3 How do people work for peace around the world? (Pathway 3)
- 4.4 What can make our world a fairer place for all? (Pathway 3)
- 4.5 Does God exist? (Pathway 6)
- 4.6 What are Human Rights and what do religious groups have to say about them? (Pathway 5)
- 4.7 How can people work together to tackle extremism? (Pathway 5)
- 4.8 What are the ethical questions of the future? (Pathway 3)
- 4.9 Is there a connection between religion, citizenship and the state? (Pathway 5)
- 4.10 What can we learn from the diversity of faith and belief? (Pathway 1)
- 4.11 What is the significance of Ramadan? (Pathway 2)
- 4.12 What is the search for Enlightenment? (Pathway 4)
- 4.13 How is diversity evident in Christian and Muslim thought? (Pathway 1)

Support for RE in West Yorkshire

Continuing Professional Development

An extensive programme of professional development is available, including day, half day and twilight courses on subjects such as:

- Leading RE in a Primary School
- Subject Knowledge of World Faiths
- Assessment
- Creative Teaching of RE
- Collective Worship

Courses are run on-line when necessary or appropriate. Bespoke training can also be arranged in schools or clusters to support the delivery of this syllabus and to promote effective RE teaching.

Details can be accessed through local authorities or via enquiries@penninelearning.com.
www.penninelearning.com.

Other useful sources of professional development include:

RE Hubs	https://www.re-hubs.uk/
RE Online	https://www.reonline.org.uk/
National Association of Teachers of RE	https://www.natre.org.uk/

Guidance

Guidance and template policies are available from each of the local authorities. Examples include:

- Sensitivity to issues of faith in schools
- RE Policy
- Collective Worship
- Withdrawal from RE and/or Collective Worship

Half day reviews of religious education can be arranged.

Local Contacts

For further information on local RE and support, please use these initial contact details:

Bradford	Adele Rowley	adele.rowley@bradford.gov.uk
Calderdale	Ian Ross	ian@penninelearning.com
Kirklees	Ian Ross	ian@penninelearning.com
Leeds	Helen Rivers	helen.rivers@leeds.gov.uk
General		enquiries@penninelearning.com

Enriching RE through engagement with faith communities

Diversity is multi-faceted and does not only apply to ethnicity or faith. Nevertheless, engagement with people of different faiths is a critical element of RE and of nurturing tolerance and understanding. This can take the form of a visit to a faith community or receiving a visitor in an assembly, class or special event. It may be done on-line as well as face-to-face. Many schools find it invaluable to arrange such engagement to help students to broaden their understanding and experience of our communities and world.

These occasions can:

- Contribute to our obligation to promote fundamental values of respect and tolerance.
- Broaden pupils' experience and perspectives and develop their critical thinking skills.
- Build bridges in our local communities.
- Enrich the provision for religious education and fulfil requirements of the syllabus.

Schools often use visitors as well as, or instead of, arranging an external visit. Unless such an occasion is specifically part of the RE curriculum or an act of collective worship, there is no statutory right to withdraw. It can still enable pupils to understand about different people and cultures.

There are some key things to consider in planning an encounter:

- What are the aims? Have these been discussed and shared with the visitor?
- Ensure the school is managing the event throughout. This will help the visitor as well as you.
- Follow normal safeguarding procedures, while also offering appropriate welcome and hospitality.
- Prepare the pupils, staff and parents; celebrate the occasion and links with the wider community.

It is good to remember that staff (not just teaching staff) and parents may be a source of diverse experience that can be celebrated in school and learnt from by pupils. Sensitivity is needed, and such contributions need to match the willingness, confidence and experience of the person concerned. At the same time this participation can affirm and enrich the participant.

Sometimes parents or carers are reluctant to allow their child to participate on a specific visit. All school visits require parental consent and as a concomitant, parents have a legal right to withhold such consent. While schools must always respect (and be seen to respect) parents' statutory rights, teachers can try to encourage full participation as part of every child's right to a broad and balanced education.

Be aware that parental reluctance may stem from a number of reasons and should not be automatically dismissed as ignorance or prejudice. There can also be genuine fears and doubts and it is always good to encourage a parent or carer to articulate their questions.

Schools have found some of the ideas below useful in dealing with doubts, or in building a culture where visits and visitors are part of the yearly routine and welcomed by all.

- It is good practice to ask to discuss such an issue face to face. There may be specific reasons why a parent is reluctant to allow consent. A meeting gives the opportunity to reassure and for the parent to think through what is best.
- Be very clear about the facts – communicate the nature, purpose and content of the visit at an early stage and continue to do so.
- Be clear about the value of the visit – how and why it will be helpful for pupils and how it links to the curriculum.
- Celebrate the event through displays and information on newsletters, website or parents' evenings. Use last year's pictures to help promote this year's event.
- Link it into a wider school context, for example as part of a sequence of visits or events that engage with diversity or as a contribution to a wider antibullying or tolerance agenda.
- Communicate the enjoyment and participation involved. It's a shame if a child misses out on the experience shared by others in the class.
- Involve parents – as helpers or through sharing what is happening.

List of Contacts and Opportunities

A list of contacts is regularly updated to help schools contact faith communities. Such engagement can enrich students' religious education and, more widely, enhance awareness, understanding and tolerance of religious diversity in our region. It includes individuals who are willing to come into school to support your work and bring some direct engagement with faith communities. It also includes some general information about places and organisations. Additional information and suggestions are always welcome. The list is available in respective local authorities and at www.penninelearning.com.

The list does not, of course, foreclose or replace local contacts. Schools can readily make contact directly with local places of worship. In particular, the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches operate parish systems where there is always a local church with pastoral responsibility for the local community.

The purpose of visits envisaged here is to support the education of young people, not in any way to persuade or proselytise. However, we hope that direct engagement with people of faith will enliven and inspire pupils' thinking so they can make their own judgments and develop their own understanding.

Although due care has been taken to check that individuals and organisations are appropriate and bona fide, it is neither apt nor possible to conduct safeguarding or quality assurance checks in a comprehensive way. Please be clear that is the responsibility of individual schools to undertake normal safeguarding and quality assurance procedures for themselves.

Education and Faith Project

The Education and Faith Project plans a range of supporting activities, both face-to-face and on-line. It is supported and financed by Kirklees and Leeds SACRES. Activities include:

- School interfaith conferences
- Question Time panels
- Training and information for faith communities engaged in schoolwork (see below)
- A regularly updated list of contacts
- Audit and review tools for use in schools independently or with consultant support



Training is available for faith communities supporting understanding of the RE syllabus, modelling activities to use with pupils and providing guidance on protocols. Faith communities can also gain recognition of the quality of visits through the 'Welcoming Schools' logo. Communities which have gained this award are marked in the list.

For more details please contact helen@penninelearning.com.

Bradford Interfaith and Diversity Education

This is a team of faith tutors representing the six major world faiths, offering a range of services which help promote respect, tolerance, equality and understanding, by dispelling myths and misunderstandings.

The Ofsted Education Inspection Framework 2019 makes specific reference to “developing an understanding and appreciation of diversity” and also “celebrating what we have in common and promoting respect for the different protected characteristics as defined in law”. Our service can help you fulfil this duty. Schools have reported a change in children’s behaviour following our visits or assemblies, reporting that they appear calmer and more peaceful with an enhanced spiritual awareness.

The flexible and responsive service can offer the following activities across the six major world faiths:

- Guided visits to faith settings
- Faith-based workshops
- Collective worship (inclusive or separate faith)
- Bespoke group training for staff
- Advice and guidance – email helpline
- Advice and guidance – one-to-one support for staff

All services can be delivered face-to-face or virtually with, for example, a pre-recorded virtual visit to a place of worship coupled with a tailor-made live session with the tutor (virtual or face-to-face). The service is also open to any organisation wanting to learn more about faith and diversity. Previous clients include colleges, universities, the police, NHS, BBC, Ministry of Defence.

Contact the team on interfaith@bradford.gov.uk or see skills4bradford.co.uk for more details.

RE Quality Mark

The RE Quality Mark is a national award acknowledging and celebrating outstanding RE. It is based on a self-assessment audit followed by an on-line visit from an assessor. For full details go to www.reqm.org.



Appendices



Drawings provided by: Gledhow Primary

Appendix 1

Possible Subject Content by Pathway

A summary of knowledge and understanding for the specified religions/worldviews is included in the full licensed syllabus.

Content is organised into the six 'pathways' so that key themes can be straightforwardly linked across different faiths where appropriate. In applying this, schools are free to adapt it to a 'best fit' model. The descriptors are taken or adapted from the Big Ideas project.

Appendix 2

Subject Content by Religion/Worldview

A summary of knowledge and understanding for the specified religions/worldviews is included in the full licensed syllabus.



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Humanists UK

Kiran Bali, MBE

Leeds 0-5 Early Years Improvement Team

Leeds 5-11 Learning Improvement Team

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West Oaks School, Leeds

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Believing and Belonging

Religious Education
Agreed Syllabus
2024-2029



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