



Cambridgeshire  
County Council

# The Agreed Syllabus 2013

Religious  
Education in  
Cambridgeshire



‘Together We Learn’



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## Acknowledgements

Members of Cambridgeshire SACRE and Agreed Syllabus Conference Group and those teachers who have supported the syllabus.

## Disc (attached to facing page)

- Further Aspects of RE Provision  
Disc Additional Support Materials
- Six Fields on Enquiry for Religious Education
  - Skills for Learning in Religious Education
  - Attitudes in Religious Education
  - Personal Learning and Thinking Skills in Religious Education
  - Acronyms
  - Unpacking the Religions through Attainment Target One (AT1) and Attainment Target Two (AT2) Questions
  - Guidelines on visiting places of worship
  - Extension Material for Key Stage Three Pupils Gifted and Talented in Religious Education
  - Promoting Other Aspects of the Curriculum through Religious Education
  - Learning Outside the Classroom
  - Religious Education and Inclusion
  - Every Child Matters in Religious Education
  - Religious Education and Information Communication Technology (ICT)
  - The Role of the Teacher in Religious Education and Handling Controversial Issues
  - A Glossary for Religious Education
  - Resource Information
  - Planning in a Diverse Curriculum
  - The Planning Framework
  - Exemplar Units of Work

# Foreword

This Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education has been created by the Cambridgeshire Agreed Syllabus Conference and approved by the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education. It is the legal basis for Religious Education (RE) in Cambridgeshire from September 2013.

Since 1944, all schools have been required to teach RE to all pupils on the school roll (except when parents exercise their right to withdraw their children from the subject). Religious Education is a core subject of the Basic Curriculum for all pupils, and this Agreed Syllabus is equivalent to the government's subject orders for the subjects of the National Curriculum.

Most of the new developments in this document reflect the significant changes which have impacted on Religious Education, including the introduction of the new Secondary Curriculum in 2008, the current review of the National Curriculum, Religious Education in English Schools Non-Statutory Guidance (DCSF 2010) the duties of the Equalities Act 2010, the importance of the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development of pupils across the curriculum in the new Ofsted framework of 2012, and the outcomes of the 2010 Long Report for Religious Education, namely 'Transforming Religious Education'.

The syllabus explains the values and purposes of RE for all pupils, and specifies for the teachers what shall be taught in each age group, using enquiry-based learning. It provides a coherent framework to allow for deeper levels of knowledge and understanding of religious and non-religious life stances, and to develop respect and sensitivity, so that, as future citizens, they will value and celebrate cultural and religious diversity, in peaceful co-existence. It continues to provide opportunities for pupils to explore their own beliefs, values and traditions.

It has been informed by consultation with schools and with faith and belief communities through the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE).

This Agreed Syllabus provides a framework for setting high standards of learning in Religious Education and assists in enabling pupils to reach their potential in the subject.



# Introduction

**Pupils aged 5-11 from Mayfield Community Schools said**

“We enjoy Religious Education because it helps you to understand other people’s beliefs and it teaches you to respect others and their different cultures and ways of life; it helps you ask big questions that you want to ask, like ‘where am I from?’”

These pupils’ experience of Religious Education at school is clearly a positive one. They summarise the important role that this subject has to play in preparing the children and young people of Cambridgeshire for adult life, employment and lifelong learning.

Cambridgeshire’s population is expanding and in our ever changing, diverse world, it is essential that we grow in our understanding of ourselves and of those around us in order to build respectful and cohesive communities where people can live and work harmoniously, side by side.

‘Together We Learn’ sees Religious Education as a challenging, thought-provoking subject, relevant for children and young people of all faiths or none. It seeks to develop an awareness of one’s own beliefs, values and commitments, to share experiences and to learn from one another and from the religions in our community.

We believe that Religious Education taught according to this new syllabus will raise standards of teaching and learning and help to prepare the children and young people of Cambridgeshire for the challenges of the future. It will help enable them to discern what is of value within and outside religious traditions and contribute to their own personal development and sense of identity.

We are delighted therefore to be able to commend ‘Together We Learn’ to you.



# Executive Summary: What Schools Must Do

## Essential Agreed Syllabus Requirements for Religious Education:

- All pupils on the school roll are entitled to receive Religious Education. This includes pupils in the second year of the Foundation Stage up to and including 16-19 year-old pupils in Sixth Forms.
- This syllabus is the legal basis for Religious Education in Cambridgeshire Schools for all Community Schools, Foundation Schools (apart from those with a religious foundation where parents request RE to be 'denominational' or taught in accordance with the Trust Deed of the school), Voluntary-Controlled Schools (apart from those with a religious foundation where parents request RE to be 'denominational' or taught in accordance with the Trust Deed of the school) and Special Schools.
- The Agreed Syllabus specifies the statutory core units (CU) of study for each key stage and the minimum number of school-designed units. There are support and guidance materials to help construct Schemes of Work. Schools can devise their own school-designed units (SDUs) to add breadth and depth of study or use the additional Programmes of Study recommended in the Syllabus.
- The core and additional units of work are based upon the 'Community of Enquiry' approach to teaching and learning. A key question is explored through a number of smaller questions over a series of lessons.
- **At Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2**, 50% of the syllabus will be core units and 50% will be school-designed units.
- **At Key Stage 3**, there is more flexibility and there will be 1/3 core units, 2/3 school-designed units per year. In all of the core units, a 'Community of Enquiry' approach to learning has been adopted, and schools are encouraged to adopt a similar process for the school-designed units.
- **At Key Stage 4**, all pupils follow an accredited GCSE Religious Studies course or ASDAN course with a Religious Studies element. Pupils must include studying Christianity and at least one other religion in their course.
- **At Key Stage 5**, there are ten topics in the syllabus. Pupils should cover two of the topics over a minimum of 15 hours in the key stage. The hours can be flexible and it could be presented in the form of a conference on a topic or a short course on the topic.
- Time for Religious Education is strongly recommended to be 5% of curriculum time in Key Stages 1 to 4. At Key Stage 5, a minimum of 15 hours across the key stage is the recommendation. Time for Religious Education should be clearly identifiable and avoid tokenism. However, it is for the school to ensure that adequate time and resources are given to ensure coverage of the Agreed Syllabus.



- It is a legal requirement for pupils to have opportunities to learn about the principal religions in the UK. In Cambridgeshire, the requirements for religions and beliefs to be studied are:
  - **EYFS** Christianity and other religions or belief systems represented in the school and local area
  - **KS1 Christianity + Sikhism** (four core units on Christianity and two on Sikhism plus six school-designed units)
  - **Lower Key Stage 2 Christianity + Judaism and Islam** (four core units on Christianity and one on Judaism, one on Islam plus six school-designed units)
  - **Upper Key Stage 2 Christianity + Hinduism and Buddhism** (four core units on Christianity, one on Hinduism and one on Buddhism plus six school-designed units)
  - **KS3 Christianity + revisit the other major faiths** (three core units on Christianity + three inter-faith units that promote respect and understanding of many faiths and none, drawing especially upon those represented in the school, plus 12 school-designed units)
  - **14-19** Christianity plus one other religion selected by the school or a nationally accredited qualification such as GCSE Short or Full Course with a focus on Christianity and with reference to at least one other religion
  - Non-religious or secular life stances should be included where appropriate throughout the key stages.
- Guidance is provided for the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- There are two Attainment Targets for Religious Education:
  - AT1 = Learning About Religion and Belief
  - AT2 = Learning From Religion and Belief
- **Assessment in RE**  
There is an eight-level scale and Performance Descriptors (P Scales) which can be used to assess pupils' progress and establish expectations (the use of the scale for reporting and marking is a matter for schools to determine).
- **Reporting Achievement to SACRE**  
SACRE will invite schools to complete and submit a summary of the End of Key Stage Data at the end of Key Stages 1, 2, and 3. This is teacher assessment and informs the annual report for the Local Authority and the Department for Education (DfE). The data is to be sent to SACRE at the end of the summer term.
- Extensive support materials can be found on the disc supplied with this syllabus.
- The Agreed Syllabus is to be implemented fully by schools from September 2013.



# What Teachers Have to Teach

## The Statutory Requirement

- Religious Education must be taught in accordance with an Agreed Syllabus in:
  - Community Schools
  - Foundation Schools (apart from those with a religious foundation where parents request RE to be ‘denominational’ or taught in accordance with the Trust Deed of the school)
  - Voluntary-Controlled Schools (apart from when parents request RE to be ‘denominational’ or taught in accordance with the Trust Deed of the school) (S.375 EA 96, S.80 EA 02, S.69 [1] SSFA, Schedule 19 SSFA.)
  - Special Schools must comply with delivering Religious Education as far as it is practicable in line with the Agreed Syllabus
  - Academies in the local authority are invited to use the Cambridgeshire Agreed Syllabus. The funding agreements require each academy to provide for RE, either in accordance with the requirements for Agreed Syllabi in S.375(3) EA96 and paragraph 2(5) Schedule 19 SSFA, and having regard to the Non-Statutory National Framework for Religious Education in schools. Or, alternatively, where the academy is to be designated as a school with a religious character, provision shall be made for Religious Education to be given to all pupils at the Academy in accordance with the tenets of a specified religion or religious denomination.
- Religious Education 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”. (1996 Act, Ch 56 S375 (3)).
- Religious Education must be non-denominational, but teaching about denominational differences is permitted (however, this is not to be taken as “prohibiting provision in such a syllabus for the study of such catechisms or formularies”). (Schedule 19, paragraph 2[5] SSFA).
- The Headteacher, along with the Governing Body and the Local Authority, is responsible for the provision of Religious Education in Foundation and Community maintained schools and in Voluntary-Controlled schools (see Paragraph 2 above). (S.69 [1] SSFA and Statutory Instrument 2005/1437).
- Schools are required to provide an annual report for parents on the attainment and progress of each child in Religious Education, as for other subjects of the curriculum.
- SACREs are legally required to produce an annual report about the quality and provision of RE in schools in their local authority. In order to provide accurate information about RE in Cambridgeshire, every July, schools will be invited to submit teacher-assessed levels at the end of each key stage and information about provision for RE at Key Stage 4 / 5.



## Programmes of Study and RE Provision for All Key Stages

- **All pupils** on the school roll are entitled to receive Religious Education. This includes pupils in the second year of the foundation stage up to and including 16-19 year old pupils in Sixth Forms.
- **This syllabus** is the legal basis for RE in Cambridgeshire schools for all Community Schools, Foundation Schools (apart from those with a religious foundation where parents request RE to be 'denominational' or taught in accordance with the Trust Deed of the school), Voluntary-Controlled Schools (apart from those with a religious foundation where parents request RE to be 'denominational' or taught in accordance with the Trust Deed of the school) and Special Schools.
- **Core Units and School-Designed Units:** At Key Stages 1 to 3 there will be Programmes of Study that will required to be taught by all schools known as **core units (CUs)** and other Programmes of Study will be determined by the school. These will be known as **school-designed units (SDUs)**. Having core units across the key stages will help teachers to know what progression looks like in RE and how to build upon prior learning. It will also build up confidence and expertise with assessment as opportunities to moderate between schools will be possible. The SDUs will be determined by the school and they are encouraged to apply enquiry-based learning to their Programmes of Study. Such flexibility allows for schools to design units of work that reflect the local faith population of their school and community. Schools can study religions that are appropriate to their community, as well as the religions covered in the core units.
- **At KS1 and KS2:** **three** core units and **three** school-designed units **per year**.
- **At KS3:** **two** core units and **four** school-designed units **per year**.
- **At KS4:** Over two years, all pupils follow an **accredited GCSE** Religious Studies course or ASDAN course with a Religious Studies element. Pupils must include **studying Christianity and at least one other religion** in their course.
- **At KS5:** Pupils must cover at least **two** of the topics from a selection of topics that cover a minimum of **15 hours** throughout the key stage.
- The Agreed Syllabus requires **the following religions to be studied in depth in these key stages**, plus other religions as appropriate:

Key Stage	Religions to be Studied
Foundation Stage / Reception	Christianity and religions and beliefs represented in the class, school or local community
Key Stage 1	Christianity and Sikhism
Key Stage 2	Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism
Key Stage 3	Christianity and revisiting the other major faiths, building on prior knowledge of Islam, Judaism, Sikhism, Hinduism and Buddhism
Key Stage 4	Two religions, including Christianity (through a recognised national Religious Studies qualification - GCSE, ASDAN, or CoEA or school-designed units of work presented to SACRE for approval)
16-19 RE for All	Belief systems and life stances as appropriate

# Religious Education in the Whole Curriculum: Aims and Purposes

## The Purpose of the Agreed Syllabus

### 1. To establish an entitlement

The Agreed Syllabus secures for all pupils, irrespective of social background, culture, race, religion, gender, differences in ability and disabilities, an entitlement to learning in Religious Education. This contributes to their developing knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes, which are necessary for their self-fulfillment and development as active and responsible citizens.

### 2. To establish standards

The Agreed Syllabus makes expectations for learning and attainment explicit to pupils, parents, teachers, governors, employers and the public, and establishes standards for the performance of all pupils in Religious Education. These standards may be used to set targets for improvement and measure progress towards those targets.

### 3. To promote continuity and coherence

The Agreed Syllabus contributes to a coherent curriculum for Religious Education and promotes continuity. It facilitates the transition of pupils between schools and phases of education and can provide foundations for further study and lifelong learning.

### 4. To promote public understanding

The Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education will increase public understanding of, and confidence in, the work of schools in RE. Through the SACRE, the religious communities of Cambridgeshire and beyond have been involved in its development.

## The Legal Background to the Agreed Syllabus

The legal requirements relating to Religious Education are set out in the Education Act 1996 and the Education Standards and Framework Act 1998. The main requirements are that:

- religious education should be provided for all registered pupils in schools
- in county maintained and Voluntary-Controlled schools religious education must be taught in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus
- an agreed syllabus must reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in the country
- what is taught must not be limited to any particular religious denomination, though these may be studied.

As part of the basic curriculum, religious education should promote pupils' broader personal development.

The headteacher, the governors and the local authority have a joint responsibility to ensure that religious education is provided.

The school brochure should include information about the religious education provided in the school and parents' right to withdraw their children from it.

Information on progress in religious education must be included in pupils' annual reports.

In Special Schools, every pupil should receive religious education as far as is practicable.

## Withdrawal from Religious Education

### Pupils

In accordance with S.71 SSFA, a parent of a pupil may request:

- that the pupil may be wholly or partly excused from receiving Religious Education given in accordance with the school's basic curriculum
- that a pupil who is wholly or partly excused from receiving Religious Education provided by the school may in certain circumstances receive Religious Education of the kind desired by the parent elsewhere, provided that it will not interfere with the attendance of the pupil on any day except at the beginning or end of a school session (S.71 [3] [b] SSFA)
- that a pupil who is wholly or partly excused from receiving Religious Education provided by the school may receive Religious Education of the kind desired by the parent on the school premises provided that it does not entail any expenditure by the responsible authority.

### Teachers

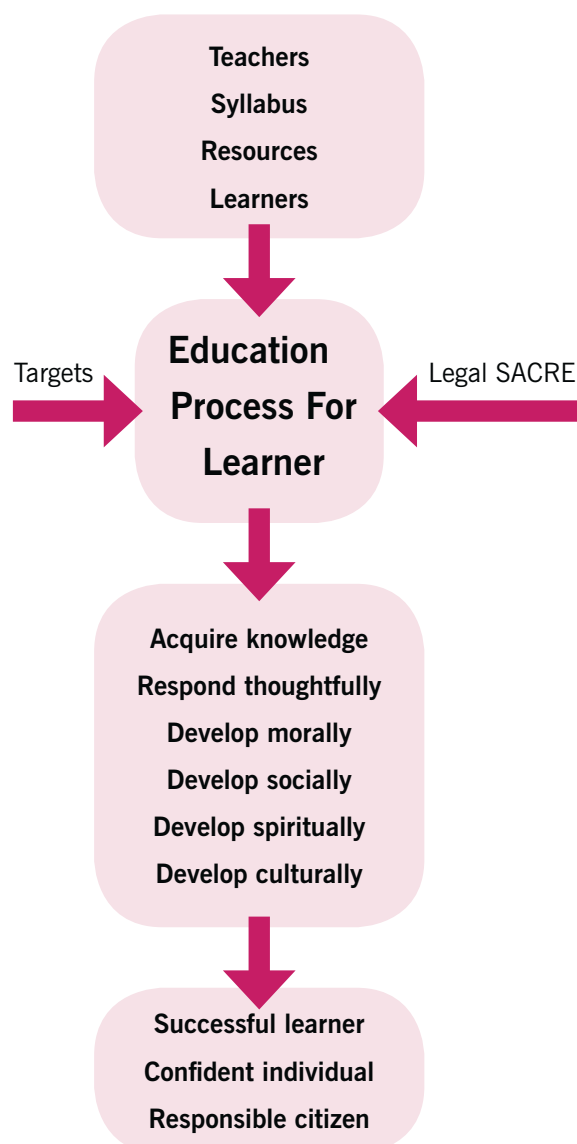
With specific exceptions, teachers may withdraw from teaching Religious Education and they should not be discriminated against for their religious opinions or practices. Further information and guidance can be found in 'Religious Education in English Schools: Non-statutory Guidance 2010'

[www.teachernet.gov.uk/publicationsRef/DCSF-00114-2010](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/publicationsRef/DCSF-00114-2010)

## Religious Education's Contribution to the Aims of Education

The diagram below shows the links between the local Agreed Syllabus, SACRE, teachers and learners, the aims of Religious Education and those of education.

Learning and teaching activities in RE contribute to the achievement of curriculum aims for all children and young people to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens.



**SUCCESSFUL LEARNERS**

who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve

**In RE this includes:**

- building increasing knowledge and understanding of religions, beliefs and of the fundamental questions of life
- developing skills and attitudes that enable broad-minded and open-hearted engagement in a diverse world
- finding interest and satisfaction in studying their own views and the views of others on ultimate questions
- being increasingly skilled at making links between beliefs, values, ways of life and religious practice and with their own experiences, ideas and viewpoints.

**CONFIDENT INDIVIDUALS**

who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives

**In RE this includes:**

- developing, through good learning, their own sense of identity in terms of beliefs and values: "If I know who I am, then I can accept who others are without fear or threat."
- reflecting on ultimate questions and on the ideas and practices of belief systems. They are then helped to understand more about themselves and others, and how to communicate. They are encouraged to develop their ideas and express them appropriately
- exploring and enquiring into the idea of human well-being, as expressed variously in different faiths and beliefs, and being able to learn confidently from the experiences and ideas of others
- making sense of the idea that a fulfilling life can be lived from many different perspectives, including religious and spiritual perspectives, and an unfulfilling life may be narrow or restricted: "The open mind never stops learning."

**RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS**

who make a positive contribution to society

**In RE this includes:**

- asking and exploring a range of answers to questions about life, individuals and society
- raising issues of local, national and global concern and placing them in spiritual and moral contexts
- understanding the beliefs and practices of religions and world views, enabling pupils to make connections between belief and action
- considering and clarifying the values and commitments by which we live, developing an understanding of positive contributions to society
- considering the beliefs behind environmental action, the needs of refugees or the work of aid agencies, to become aware of the connections between beliefs, lifestyles and ultimate questions
- considering the ideas of responsibility, e.g. for self, others, the world, and ultimate truth (for some, God)
- evaluating ethical issues and expressing views using reasoned arguments. Pupils can then enhance their capacity and desire to make a positive contribution to debates and decisions in society.

## The Aims of Religious Education

RE aims for pupils to:

- Acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions represented in the UK
- Develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs (both religious and secular) values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures
- Develop positive attitudes of respect towards other people who hold views and beliefs different from their own; living in a society of diverse religions
- Develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious issues, with reference to the teachings of the principal religions represented in Cambridgeshire and the UK
- Encourage openness to ask questions and search for answers of meaning and purpose for themselves
- Enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development 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.

## The Importance of Religious Education

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

## The Two Attainment Targets

There are two attainment targets for Religious Education which support the aims of the subject concisely. Religious Education must be relevant to pupils' own personal development and awareness. The two attainment targets are sometimes distinct in planning but often interwoven in good teaching.

**AT1 – Learning *about* Religion and Belief**

**AT2 – Learning *from* Religion and Belief**

### AT1 - LEARNING ABOUT RELIGION AND BELIEF

**Enquiring into, investigating and understanding religions and beliefs**

This includes thinking about and interpreting religious beliefs, teachings, sources, practices, ways of life and ways of expressing meaning with reference to the specific beliefs and religions studied.

### AT2 - LEARNING FROM RELIGION AND BELIEF

**Questioning, exploring, reflecting upon and interpreting human experience in the light of religions and beliefs studied.**

This includes communicating reflections, responses and evaluations about questions of identity, belonging, diversity, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments, making increasingly insightful links to the specific religions studied.

## Enquiry-Based Learning in RE

An enquiry process makes sense of the learning cycle that supports achievement of the two attainment targets. Pupils should be encouraged to explore and examine questions raised by the teacher and themselves about religious beliefs and practices and none, through gathering information, and increasing knowledge and understanding (AT1) of religions. They should engage with the material, reflect on questions of meaning and purpose for themselves and others, by responding in increasingly insightful ways (AT2).

RE is at its most effective when these two attainment targets are closely related in the learning experience:

- It is important to ensure a balance between the two attainment targets. As they learn about Christianity and other religions and world views, pupils should be encouraged to reflect, to respond and to relate their learning to their own ideas and experience.
- It follows that planning needs to ensure that a wide variety of learning activities are provided so that pupils' imagination and interests are engaged. Creative approaches to RE are to be welcomed. They should be seen as something which may contribute to the raising of standards in the broad sense, rather than as an enjoyable distraction. Such creative approaches may include activities which develop thinking skills, critical dialogue, and the use of the expressive arts where appropriate. They will draw on and reflect the enthusiasm and expertise of teachers.



# Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development and Religious Education's Contribution

## Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

The Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education in Cambridgeshire enables the teaching of RE to make a distinctive and significant contribution to these four aspects of pupils' development.

While schools provide for these aspects of personal development in many ways, and through

many subjects of the curriculum, RE may often focus on spiritual and moral education within the curriculum, and makes a distinctive contribution to understanding cultural diversity through developing understanding of religions and beliefs. These opportunities for personal development contribute to high standards and aspirations for each pupil.

**There is extensive literature on these topics, which are always contested. For the purposes of the RE syllabus, the following descriptions provide a basis for ways in which the RE curriculum can contribute to pupils' personal development.**

### Spiritual Development

enables people to look within themselves, at human relationships, at the wider world and at the vision of the divine or the ultimate reality with characteristics such as courage, hope, acceptance, strength, insight and love, so that they can face all the sufferings, challenges and opportunities of human life.

#### Religious Education provides opportunities to promote SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT through:

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

### **Moral Development**

enables pupils to take an increasingly thoughtful view of what is right and wrong, to recognise the needs and interests of others as well as themselves and develop characteristics such as truthfulness, kindness, unselfishness and commitments to virtues such as integrity, justice and the will to do what is right, so that they can live in ways which respect the well-being and rights of each person.

#### **Religious Education provides opportunities to promote MORAL DEVELOPMENT through:**

- enhancing the values identified within the National Curriculum, particularly valuing diversity and engaging in issues of truth, justice and trust
- exploring the influence of family, friends and media on moral choices and how society is influenced by beliefs, teachings, sacred texts and guidance from religious leaders
- considering what is of ultimate value to pupils and believers through studying the key beliefs and teachings from religion and philosophy about values and ethical codes of practice
- studying a range of ethical issues, including those that focus on justice, to promote racial and religious respect, community cohesion and personal integrity
- considering the importance of rights and responsibilities and developing a sense of conscience.

### **Social Development**

enables pupils to relate to others successfully through an understanding of the responsibilities and rights of being a member of various families, local, national and global communities. It enables them to develop social skills, qualities, attitudes and characteristics such as respectfulness, tolerance, a willingness to get involved, so that they can play a full and fulfilling part in their community and society as, for example, family members, citizens, learners and workers.

#### **Religious Education provides opportunities to promote SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT through:**

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

## Cultural Development

enables people to develop their sense of their own place and identity in society, to value and participate creatively in their own culture and appreciate the cultures of others. Cultural development enables people to develop understanding, qualities and attitudes which lead to appreciation or participation in local, regional, national, European and global cultures.

**Religious Education provides opportunities to promote CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT through:**

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

“ Religious Education helps you to grow as a person. We enjoy learning about other religions. ”

**Lucy and Kenny, KS4 pupils from a City Academy**



# Teaching and Learning in Religious Education

This section of the syllabus is designed to help teachers recognise what they need to do to help pupils to make the best progress in Religious Education.

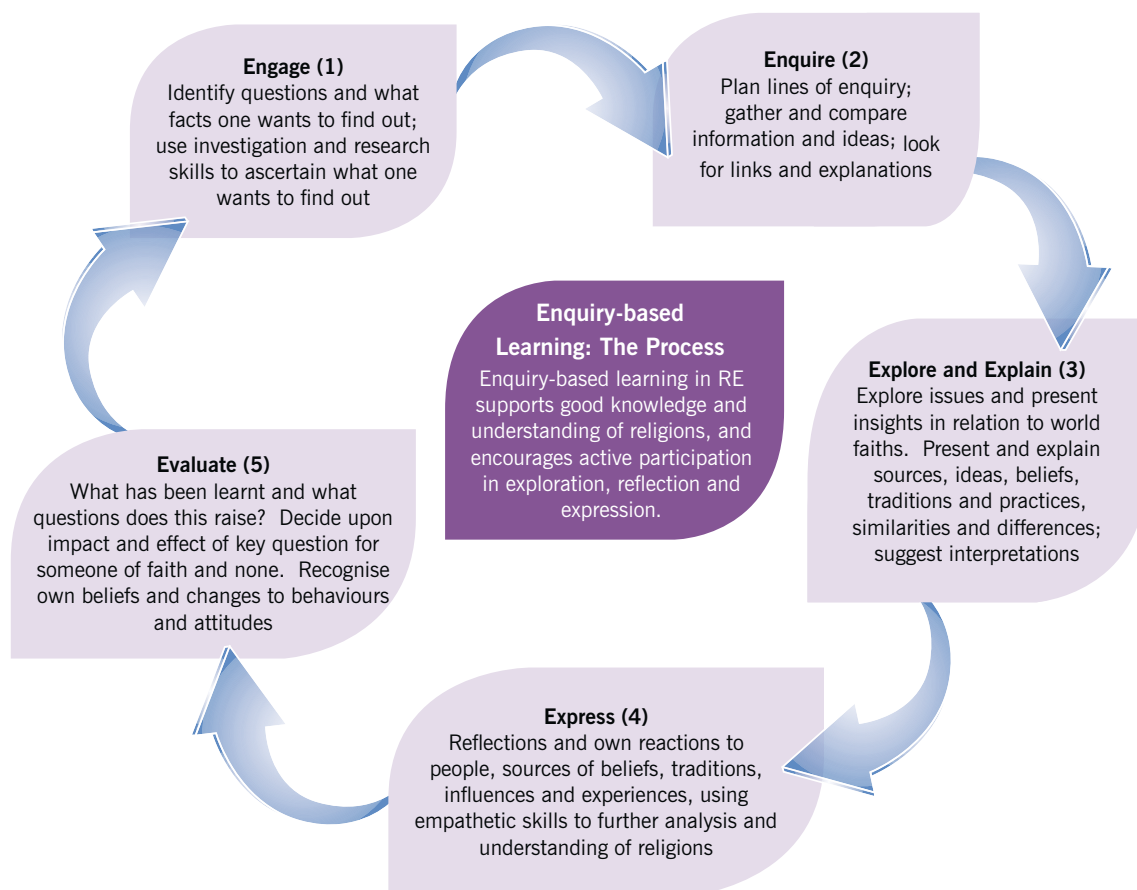
## Communities of Enquiry: The Processes for Learning

The Cambridgeshire Agreed Syllabus supports the outcomes of the Ofsted Long Report 2010 'Transforming Religious Education', in which it is recommended the use of enquiry-based learning in all phases of teaching religious education. There are different ways in which an enquiry process can be developed if pupils are to learn for themselves. These processes, at work in the whole curriculum, are suited to learning needs across the age range. The core units of study in this syllabus model enquiry-based teaching

and learning; and it is hoped that the school-designed units will have a similar approach. There is a key question to each core unit of work, with a series of smaller questions that unpick the main question. The support material accompanying this syllabus has more details for each scheme of work.

RE flourishes where teachers don't merely transmit knowledge but enable pupils to be active, thoughtful, reflective and expressive in their handling of questions about beliefs, religion, spirituality and values. This means that pupils are actively engaged in exploration, reflection and expression, making learning personalised and effective.

For full details about the methodology of enquiry-based learning and different fields of enquiry, see the support material on the accompanying disc.



We know that we all learn in a variety of different ways. This Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education therefore requires a wide range of teaching and learning methods to be employed by teachers so that all pupils can make progress at a good pace and achieve the highest standards possible.

Teachers should use active processes of learning as well as factual or knowledge-based instruction. In particular, this means that RE will make use of the widest possible range of key strategies for learning.

Six examples of different pedagogies (learning strategies) are elaborated upon in the guidance paper on the disc. It is important for teachers to consider these approaches and ensure that they use this broad range of strategies with pupils. This will enable all pupils to encounter approaches that particularly help them to learn and widen their experience of a range of styles of learning. They will draw on and reflect the enthusiasm and expertise of teachers.

## Six Key Concepts in Religious Education

Whichever way schools choose to develop enquiry-based learning, all schools must take account of the six key concepts:

### A. Beliefs, Teachings and Sources (AT1)

- understanding, explaining and interpreting teachings, sources, authorities and ways of life in order to express reasoned views about religions and beliefs
- understanding, explaining and interpreting beliefs, teachings and attitudes in relation to the human quest for identity, meaning and values.

### B. Practices and Ways of Life (AT1)

- understanding, explaining and interpreting the varied impacts of religions and beliefs on how people live their lives
- applying ideas and expressing insights about the impact of practices from religions and beliefs on ways of life.

### C. Expressing Meaning (AT1)

- understanding and expressing ideas and insights about the meanings of different forms of religious, spiritual, moral and cultural expression
- understanding, explaining and interpreting ways in which religions and beliefs use literature, the arts, music, architecture and other forms of creative expression to respond to ultimate questions.

### D. Identity, Diversity and Belonging (AT2)

- understanding, explaining and interpreting varied viewpoints on issues connecting personal and communal identity
- applying ideas and expressing insights into questions of identity, diversity and belonging in personal and communal contexts and in relation to community cohesion.

### E. Meaning, Purpose and Truth (AT2)

- describing and expressing insights into ultimate questions that confront humanity
- applying ideas and expressing insights into questions of meaning and purpose in relation to religion and beliefs
- explaining different ideas about what is true.

### F. Values and Commitments (AT2)

- understanding, explaining and interpreting moral values and how they can relate to beliefs and experience
- expressing views and ideas about their own and others' values and commitments in order to make informed, rational and imaginative choices.

## Religious Education and Inclusion

RE can make a significant contribution to inclusion, particularly via its focus on promoting respect for all. It is for all pupils, both from faith and secular backgrounds. Effective inclusion involves teaching a lively, stimulating religious education curriculum that:

- builds on and is enriched by the differing experiences pupils bring to religious education, whatever their religious or philosophical background, so that all of them feel their contributions are valued
- meets all pupils' learning needs including those with learning difficulties and those who are gifted and talented, both boys and girls, pupils for whom English is an additional language, pupils from all religious communities and pupils from a wide range of ethnic groups and diverse family backgrounds
- encourages the challenging of derogatory stereotypes.

The statutory statement on inclusion shows how schools can modify as necessary the Programmes of Study of the curriculum to provide all pupils with relevant and appropriately challenging work at each key stage. It sets out three principles that are essential to developing a more inclusive curriculum:

1. Setting suitable learning challenges
2. Responding to pupils' diverse learning needs
3. Overcoming potential barriers to learning

## RE and Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

The law requires that so far as is practicable, every pupil attending a special school shall receive religious education. RE is a statutory part of the core curriculum for all pupils, including those with learning difficulties. Pupils with SEN are found in all contexts and all teachers are teachers of SEN.

The general characteristics of RE in this context will be similar to those of good RE in a mainstream context, and will also in particular provide a context in which fundamental questions about profound, puzzling and difficult areas of life can be discussed as they arise. There is also a distinction to be made between the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and those with special physical, health and emotional needs.

Good quality teaching in RE will tailor the planning of the syllabus carefully to the special needs of all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs will not always reach Level 1 of the expectations in RE.

Where appropriate, the Performance Descriptions (P Scales) may be used as an indicator for progress within RE. Work relating to the Programme of Study that is planned for pupils with SEN should take account of the targets and recommendations in their Individual Educational Programmes.

For the small number of pupils who may need the provision, material may be selected from earlier or later key stages, to enable individual pupils to progress and demonstrate achievement. Such material should be presented in contexts suitable to the pupil's age. In making decisions about adjusting the content of the key stage, teachers should take into account the previous experience of the pupil as well as the need to communicate to subsequent teachers a specific differentiated approach to entitlement.

Further information and guidance on SEN, including 'I Can' statements for the P Scales can be found in the Support Materials on the accompanying disc.

Further guidance is also available in 'Planning, Teaching and Assessing the Curriculum for Pupils with Learning Difficulties – Religious Education' (QCDA 2009) which is included in the Support Materials on the disc.

## RE for Pupils who are Gifted and Talented

Pupils who are gifted in RE are likely to:

- show high levels of insight into, and discernment beyond, the obvious and ordinary
- make sense of, and draw meaning from, religious symbols, metaphors, texts and practices
- be sensitive to, or aware of, the numinous or the mystery of life, and have a feeling for how these are explored and expressed
- understand, apply and transfer ideas and concepts across topics in RE and into other religious and cultural contexts.

In more general terms, they may also:

- have highly developed skills of comprehension, analysis and research
- show quickness of understanding and depth of thought.

## RE and Pupils with Specific Religious Needs

Teachers need to be aware of the specific religious needs and sensitivities of some pupils. For example, Muslim pupils should not be asked to draw or paint pictures of key religious figures, nor to take the parts of key religious figures in drama or role play. ICT activities may be a problematic issue for pupils from Exclusive Brethren families. In most cases, the provision of alternative

activities to fulfil the same learning objective (e.g. write a poem to express a response to the title 'Jesus in today's world' instead of making a drawing, painting or collage) will mean pupils can take part in the RE work without any difficulty. Discussion with parents should allow schools to resolve any such issue sensitively.

## RE's Contribution to Personal, Social and Health Education and Citizenship

In RE, PSHE and Citizenship, social and moral issues will be considered which may be controversial. This should enable pupils to deal with difference and to develop considered and well-informed views.

In all three areas, pupils will be developing confidence and a sense of responsibility, by learning about what is fair and unfair, right and wrong, and being encouraged to share their opinions.

Although there are close links, each of these areas has its own objectives and specific learning outcomes. Subjects should not be substituted for one another.

RE contributes to PSHE when pupils learn about religious beliefs and teachings on drug use and misuse, food and drink, leisure, relationships and feelings, considering issues of marriage and family life.

RE contributes to citizenship when pupils develop their awareness of the diversity of national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom and of the need for mutual respect and understanding.

# Programmes of Study

## Curriculum Time for Religious Education

In the Foundation Stage in Reception classes, a reasonable amount of time should be allocated to RE. 'Reasonable' may be defined by reference to the Key Stage allocations.

The Dearing Report (1993) on the curriculum recommended the following allocation of lesson time for Religious Education in Key Stages 1 to 4, and subsequent reviews have continued to have the same expectation:

<b>Key Stage 1</b>	<b>36 hours per year</b>
<b>Key Stage 2</b>	<b>45 hours per year</b>
<b>Key Stage 3</b>	<b>45 hours per year</b>
<b>Key Stage 4</b>	<b>5% of curriculum time</b>

The Conference has devised the syllabus to make full use of this time.

The time may be used flexibly, but it will be important to ensure that progression and continuity in pupils' learning are maintained.

For pupils post-16, time may be blocked in a variety of ways to meet syllabus requirements, but sufficient time should be allowed to meet the aims and objectives identified for this stage. It is expected this will be around 15 hours over the key stage.

## Religions and Beliefs to be Studied

The balance between depth of understanding and coverage of the six major religions in the UK is important. The law states that Religious Education shall have due regard to "the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain." In this syllabus, there is an emphasis on the depth of study of religions and beliefs. The core units focus on one or two religions at each key stage, so that all six major faiths have been touched upon by the end of Key Stage 3. Christianity has to be the major faith studied throughout each key stage. The schools can decide whether they plan to study more than the set religion in the core units. In the school-designed units, it is expected that schools will select which religions they would want to pursue in their other topics / themes / key questions. This may be especially appropriate where children from many religions are present in one class or school. Starting from where the pupils are, the aim is to build an increasingly diverse understanding of the religions in Cambridgeshire, the UK and the world.

Additionally, schools should use material from other religious traditions and belief systems represented in the school, the local area or the UK such as Rastafari, the Baha'i faith, Jehovah's Witnesses or humanism.



The Agreed Syllabus requires the following religions to be studied in depth in these key stages, and other religions as appropriate:

Key Stage	Religions to be Studied
Foundation Stage / Reception	Christianity and religions and beliefs represented in the class, school or local community
Key Stage 1	Christianity and Sikhism
Key Stage 2	Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism
Key Stage 3	Christianity and revisiting the other major faiths building on knowledge of Islam, Judaism, Sikhism and Hinduism and Buddhism
Key Stage 4	Two religions, including Christianity (through a recognised national RS qualification - GCSE, ASDAN or CoEA or school designed units of work presented to SACRE for approval)
16-19 RE for All	Belief systems and life stances as appropriate

“In RE we learn about other people’s views, both religious and secular, and are encouraged to make up our own minds. We love the debates and it helps with listening skills.”

Christian and Lydia,  
KS4 pupils from a City Academy



# Titles of Core Units and Required Number of School-Designed Units

## Programme of Study for Early Years Foundation Stage (age 3-5)

The new Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework has been mandatory for all early years providers since September 2012 in maintained schools, non-maintained schools, independent schools and all providers on the Early Years Register.

Educational programmes must involve activities and experiences for children, from the seven areas of Learning and Development as follows:

### Prime Areas

- **Communication and Language** development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves, and to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- **Physical Development** involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity and to make healthy food choices in relation to food.
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

### Specific Areas

- **Literacy** development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.
- **Mathematics** involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.
- **Understanding the World** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- **Expressive Arts and Design** involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

Teaching Religious Education to 3-5 year olds requires a multi-sensory approach, providing opportunities for pupils to learn and understand about themselves, others (personal and social development) and the world (understanding the world) and to develop pupils' abilities to express themselves (communication and language, literacy, expressive arts).

Religious Education is not compulsory for pupils in a nursery school or nursery class in a primary school. Religious Education is compulsory for all pupils who are registered at a school, including those in a Reception class.

## Breadth of Study

During the Foundation Stage, pupils should be taught the knowledge, understanding and skills of Religious Education through:

<p><b>Beginning to learn about Christianity</b></p> <p>(Schools may also plan to begin learning about other religions and belief systems. For example, those represented in the school and the local area)</p>	<p><b>Experience of:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>special times and events, such as birthdays, a baby welcoming ceremony such as baptism, Hanukkah, Divali, Christmas and Easter</li> <li>ways that people show that they belong in families or communities</li> <li>communicating, especially through worship and prayer.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Learning about Religion and Belief</b></p> <p>Knowledge and understanding that beliefs matter to people, and that people believe and live differently, their practices and lifestyles and how they express themselves. Pupils should be taught to begin:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>recounting the outlines of some religious stories</li> <li>recognising some religious symbols and words and use them correctly</li> <li>exploring features of religious life, such as celebrations, festivals, special times and places.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Learning from Religion and Belief</b></p> <p>Evaluating and responding to questions of experience, meaning and commitment. Pupils should be taught to begin:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>asking questions about things which puzzle them in life and in the religious stories</li> <li>identifying or noticing what matters or concerns them in the religious stories, artefacts, people or ideas they encounter</li> <li>exploring how they feel about themselves and the religious stories, artefacts, people or ideas they encounter.</li> </ul>

Through their knowledge, skills and understanding, pupils should develop positive attitudes towards other people and their right to hold different beliefs. Teaching should enable pupils to begin:

1. identifying their own uniqueness and that of others
2. appreciating the differences and similarities they encounter in others
3. making distinctions between good and bad, right and wrong.

### Cambridgeshire Core Units: for Foundation Stage / Reception Year

- **Ourselves, Our Families and Our Communities:**  
Where do we belong?
- **Celebrations and Special Times:**  
What happens at a festival?
- **Celebrations and Special Times:**  
What happens at a wedding or when a baby is born?
- **Special Books:**  
What can we learn from stories from different religions?

The Syllabus Support Materials on the accompanying disc provide guidance and assistance for teachers' planning.

Areas of learning and development related to Religious Education	Teaching might include:
Communication, Language and Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hearing and using key words relating to religions and experiences, including visits to places of worship</li> <li>• listening to and exploring stories from religious books and traditions</li> <li>• composing, using and thinking about words of simple prayers and reflections</li> <li>• communicating verbally (in song or in other ways) feelings and thoughts about God, people and the world</li> <li>• asking and answering questions about people's experiences of faith, life and culture, with sensitivity</li> <li>• understand that religious books are very special for some people</li> <li>• discussing family life and what makes some times special</li> <li>• talking about puzzling questions and reflecting on their answers and the ideas offered by others.</li> </ul>
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• exploring similarities and differences of those in the class, the local and wider community</li> <li>• developing awareness and understanding of themselves as unique individuals: their needs and feelings</li> <li>• developing awareness and understanding of others and their 'uniqueness'</li> <li>• learning about the influences religious beliefs can have on an individual's life and behaviour</li> <li>• exploring belonging and a sense of community</li> <li>• developing attitudes of care and tolerance, respect and fairness towards others</li> <li>• developing skills such as communication, investigation, reflection and empathy</li> <li>• remembering and celebrating</li> <li>• thanking and being thanked, praising and being praised.</li> </ul>

Areas of learning and development related to Religious Education	Teaching might include:
Understanding the World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hearing some creation stories such as those found in the Bible; and becoming aware that some people believe God made them while others do not accept this</li> <li>• visiting places of worship in the local community and exploring what can be found and how they make different people feel</li> <li>• raising awareness and reflecting on how we rely on the world's resources</li> <li>• becoming aware of seasonal change and celebrating the physical world, e.g. via a harvest festival</li> <li>• developing awareness of the world at large and reflecting on the richness in diversity – religious food and feasts, costume, special buildings, objects and artefacts</li> <li>• knowing how and why to treat artefacts with respect.</li> </ul>
Expressing Thoughts, Ideas and Feelings Creatively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• listening to and / or singing songs from various religions and cultures</li> <li>• making music and using it as a background for storytelling</li> <li>• designing and making special objects including religious artefacts</li> <li>• cooking festive religious food, making religious masks and dressing up in religious costumes.</li> </ul>



“ Religious Education helps support the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all children, and enriches everyone’s lives. ”

A primary teacher

## Programme of Study for Key Stage 1 (age 5-7)

During this key stage, schools are expected to deliver **12 units of study, lasting approximately half a term each.**

**The 12 units consist of six core units and six school-designed units.**

### Religions and Beliefs

Christianity and Sikhism

A secular world view, where appropriate

### The Focus of the Learning:

At this stage, it is important to build upon the experiences and backgrounds which the pupils come from, and provide a rich and diverse curriculum that broadens their experiences and learning about religions. This can particularly be developed through the school-designed units.

In Key Stage 1, pupils explore Christianity and at least one other principal religion. They learn about different beliefs about God and the world around them. They encounter and respond to a range of stories, artefacts and other religious materials. They learn to recognise that beliefs are expressed in a variety of ways and begin to use specialist vocabulary. They begin to understand the importance and value of religion and belief, for themselves, other children and their families.

Pupils ask relevant questions and develop a sense of wonder about the world, using their imaginations. They talk about what is important to them and others, valuing themselves, reflecting on their own feelings and experiences and developing a sense of belonging.

### Fields of Enquiry:

**Children should have secure knowledge of:**

- beliefs, teachings and sources
- practices and ways of life
- forms of expressing meaning
- identity, diversity and belonging
- meaning, purpose and truth
- values and commitment.

## Knowledge, Skills and Understanding

### Learning about Religion and Belief (AT1)

Pupils should be taught to:

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

## Learning from Religion and Belief (AT2)

Pupils should be taught to:

- **reflect on and consider** religious and spiritual feelings, experiences and concepts such as worship, wonder, praise, thanks, concern, joy and sadness
- **ask and respond** imaginatively to puzzling questions, communicating their ideas
- **identify what matters** to them and others, including those with religious commitments, and communicate their responses
- **reflect on** how spiritual and moral values relate to their own behaviour
- **recognise** that religious teachings and ideas make a difference to individuals, families and the local community.

## Breadth of Study

During the key stage, pupils should be taught knowledge, skills and understanding through the following areas of study:

- **believing:** what people believe about God, humanity and the natural world
- **story:** how and why some stories are sacred and important in religion
- **celebrations:** how and why celebrations are important in religion
- **symbols:** how and why symbols express religious meaning
- **leaders and teachers:** figures who have an influence on others locally, nationally and globally in religion
- **belonging:** where and how people belong and why belonging is important
- **myself:** who I am and my uniqueness as a person in a family and community.

## Experiences and Opportunities for Key Stage 1 Pupils:

- **Visiting places** of worship and focusing on symbols and feelings
- **Listening and responding** to visitors from local faith communities
- **Using their senses** and having times of quiet reflection
- **Using** art and design, music, dance and drama to develop creative talents and imagination
- **Sharing their own beliefs**, ideas and values and talking about their feelings and experiences
- **Beginning** to use ICT to explore religions and beliefs as practised in the local and wider community, for example through a 'virtual tour' of the sacred places of religions studied.

### Units of Study for Key Stage 1 – Core and School-Designed Units:

- **The Family in Christianity:**  
What difference does belonging to a faith make to a family?
  - **Places in Christianity:**  
What makes a church a special place for Christian people?
  - **People in Christianity:**  
Who was Jesus? A great leader and teacher?
  - **Celebrations:**  
Why is Christmas important to Christians?
  - **Stories and Symbols:**  
How do the stories from the gurus and the concept of seva affect Sikh children?
  - **Self and Community:**  
How does the Khalsa influence the lives of Sikh families?
- plus**
- **Six School-Designed Units for RE** (of which 50% must have a focus upon Christianity, though not exclusively).

## Programme of Study for Key Stage 2 (age 7-11)

### Key Stage 2

During this key stage, schools are expected to deliver **24 units of study, lasting approximately half a term each.**

**The 24 units consist of 12 core units and 12 school-designed units.**

### Religions and Beliefs

Lower Key Stage 2 =

Christianity, Judaism and Islam

Upper Key Stage 2 =

Christianity, Hinduism and Buddhism

A secular world view, where appropriate

### The Focus of the Learning:

In Key Stage 2, pupils learn about Christianity and some details of the other principal religions, recognising the impact of religion and belief locally, nationally and globally. They make connections between differing aspects of religion and consider the different forms of religious expression. They consider the beliefs, teachings, practices and ways of life central to religion. They learn about sacred texts and other sources and consider their meanings. They begin to recognise diversity in religion, learning about similarities and differences both within and between religions and beliefs, and the importance of dialogue between them. They extend the range and use of specialist vocabulary. They recognise the challenges involved in distinguishing between ideas of right and wrong and valuing what is good and true. They communicate their ideas, recognising other people's viewpoints. They consider their own beliefs and values and those of others in the light of their learning in Religious Education.

### Fields of Enquiry:

Children should have secure knowledge of:

- beliefs, teachings and sources
- practices and ways of life
- forms of expressing meaning
- identity, diversity and belonging
- meaning, purpose and truth
- values and commitment.

## Knowledge, Skills and Understanding

### Learning about Religion and Belief (AT1)

Pupils should be taught to:

- **describe** the key aspects of religions, especially people, stories and traditions that influence beliefs and values
- **describe** the variety of practices and ways of life in religions and understand how these stem from, and are closely connected to, beliefs and teachings
- **identify and begin to describe** the similarities and the differences between religions
- **investigate** the significance of religion in the local, national and global communities
- **consider the meaning** of a range of forms of religious expression, understand why they are important in religion and note links between them
- **describe and understand** religious and other responses to ultimate and ethical questions
- **use specialist vocabulary** in communicating their knowledge and understanding
- **use and interpret** information about religions from a range of sources.

## Learning from Religion and Belief (AT2)

Pupils should be taught to:

- **reflect on** what it means to belong to a faith community, communicating their own and others' responses
- **respond** to the challenges of commitment both in their own lives and within religious traditions, recognising how commitment to a religion is shown in a variety of ways
- **discuss** their own and other's views of religious truth and belief, expressing their own ideas
- **reflect** on right and wrong and their own and others' responses to them
- **reflect** on sources of inspiration in their own and others' lives.

## Breadth of Study

During the key stage, pupils should be taught knowledge, skills and understanding through the following areas of study:

- **beliefs and questions:** how people's beliefs about God, the world and others impact on their lives
- **teachings and authority:** what sacred texts and other sources say about God, the world and human life
- **worship, pilgrimage and sacred places:** where, how and why people worship, including particular sites
- **the journey of life and death:** why some occasions are sacred to believers and what people think about life and death
- **symbols and religious expression:** how religious and spiritual ideas are expressed
- **inspirational people:** figures from whom believers find inspiration
- **religion and the individual:** what is expected of a person in following a religion or belief
- **religion, family and community:** how religious families and communities practice their faith and the contribution this makes to local life
- **beliefs in action in the world:** how religions and beliefs respond to global issues of human rights, fairness, social justice, and the importance of the environment.



## Experiences and Opportunities for Key Stage 2 Pupils:

- **encountering religion** through visitors and visits to places of worship, virtual visits using ICT, and focusing on the impact and reality of religion on the local and global community
- **discussing** religious and philosophical questions, giving reasons for their own beliefs and those of others
- **considering** the range of human experiences and feelings
- **reflecting** on their own and others' insights into life and its origins, purpose and meaning
- **expressing and communicating** their own and others' insights through art and design, music, dance, drama and ICT
- **developing the use of ICT for RE**, particularly in enhancing pupils' awareness of religions and beliefs globally.

The Syllabus Support Materials on the accompanying disc provide guidance and assistance for teachers' planning.

## Units of Study for Key Stage 2 – Core and School-Designed Units:

### Lower Key Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4)

- **Judaism:**  
What is important for Jews about being part of God's family?
- **Islam:**  
Why is prayer important to Muslims and not for some people?
- **The Church Year:**  
Is Easter a festival of new life or sacrifice?
- **Christianity:**  
What do people believe about the creation of our world?
- **Church People:**  
Who are the 'Saints of God' and why are they important? (links to the church calendar)
- **Christian Worship:**  
How and why are Churches different?

#### plus

- **Six School-Designed Units for RE** (of which 50% must have a focus upon Christianity, though not exclusively).

### Upper Key Stage 2 (Years 5 and 6)

- **Hinduism:**  
What can stories and images of deities tell us about Hindu beliefs?
- **Buddhism:**  
What does it mean to be a Buddhist?  
Can we all be enlightened?
- **Jesus:**  
Who do people say I am? (e.g. Jesus explored through art)
- **Christian and Judaism:**  
Is religion what you say or what you do?
- **Christians in Other Parts of the World:**  
What is it like to be a Christian in Vellore?
- **Beliefs and Actions in the World:**  
What key beliefs influence people's faith and how do people of faith live out their lives?

#### plus

- **Six School-Designed Units for RE** (of which 50% must have a focus upon Christianity, though not exclusively).

## Programme of Study for Key Stage 3 (age 11-14)

During this key stage, schools are expected to deliver **18 units of study, lasting approximately half a term each.**

**The 18 units consist of six core units and 12 school-designed units.**

### Religions and Beliefs

Christianity, and building on previous knowledge of Islam, Judaism, Islam, Sikhism, Hinduism and Buddhism

A secular world view, where appropriate

### The Focus of the Learning:

In Key Stage 3, pupils extend their understanding of Christianity and four other principal religions in a local, national and global context. They deepen their understanding of important beliefs, concepts and issues of truth and authority in religion. They apply their understanding of religious and philosophical beliefs, teachings and practices to a range of ultimate questions and ethical issues, with a focus on self-awareness, relationships, rights and responsibilities. They enquire into and explain some personal, philosophical, theological and cultural reasons for similarities and differences in religious beliefs and values, both within and between religions.

They interpret religious texts, scriptures and other sources, recognising both the power and limitations of language and other forms of communication in expressing ideas and beliefs. They reflect on the impact of religion and belief in the world, considering both the importance of inter-faith dialogue and the tensions that exist within and between religions and beliefs. They develop their evaluative skills, showing reasoned and balanced viewpoints when considering their own and others' responses to religious, philosophical and spiritual issues.

### Fields of Enquiry:

**Children should have secure knowledge of:**

- beliefs, teachings and sources
- practices and ways of life
- forms of expressing meaning
- identity, diversity and belonging
- meaning, purpose and truth
- values and commitment.

## Knowledge, Skills and Understanding

These key concepts must be built in to the planned Key Stage 3 curriculum:

### Learning about Religion and Belief (AT1)

Pupils should be taught to:

- **investigate and explain** the differing impact of religious beliefs and teachings on individuals, communities and societies
- **analyse and explain** how religious beliefs and ideas are transmitted by people, texts and traditions
- **investigate and explain** why people belong to faith communities and explain the reasons for diversity in religion
- **analyse and compare** the evidence and the arguments used when considering issues of truth in religion and philosophy
- **discuss and evaluate** how religious beliefs and teachings inform answers to ultimate questions and ethical issues
- **apply** a wide range of religious and philosophical vocabulary consistently and accurately, recognising both the power and limitations of language in expressing religious ideas and beliefs

- **interpret and evaluate** a range of sources, texts and authorities, from a variety of contexts
- **interpret** a variety of forms of religious and spiritual expression including art, music, architecture and literature.

## Learning from Religion and Belief (AT2)

Pupils should be taught to:

- **reflect on** the relationship between beliefs, teachings and ultimate questions, communicating their own ideas and using reasoned arguments
- **evaluate** the challenges and tensions of belonging to a religion and the impact of religion in the contemporary world, expressing their own ideas
- **express insights** into the significance and value of religion and other world views on human relationships personally, locally and globally
- **reflect and evaluate** their own and others' beliefs about world issues such as peace and conflict, wealth and poverty and the importance of the environment, communicating their own ideas
- **express** their own beliefs and ideas using a variety of forms of expression.

## Breadth of Study

During the key stage, pupils should be taught knowledge, skills and understanding through the following areas of study:

- **beliefs and concepts:** the key ideas and questions of meaning in religions and beliefs, including issues related to God, truth, the world, human life and life after death
- **authority:** different sources of authority and how they inform believers' lives
- **religion and science:** issues of truth, explanation, meaning and purpose

- **expressions of spirituality:** how and why human self-understanding and experiences are expressed in a variety of forms
- **ethics and relationships:** questions and influences that inform ethical and moral choices, including forgiveness and issues of good and evil
- **rights and responsibilities:** what religions and beliefs say about human rights and responsibilities, social justice and citizenship
- **global issues:** what religions and beliefs say about health, wealth, war, animal rights and the environment
- **inter-faith dialogue:** a study of relationships, conflicts and collaboration within and between religions and beliefs.

## Experiences and Opportunities for Key Stage 3 Pupils:

- **encountering** people from different cultural and philosophical groups, who can express a range of convictions on religious and ethical issues
- **visiting**, where possible, places of major religious significance and using opportunities in ICT to enhance pupils' understanding of religion
- **discussing, questioning and evaluating** important issues in religion and philosophy, including ultimate questions and ethical issues
- **reflecting on and carefully evaluating** their own beliefs and values and those of others in response to their learning in religious education, using reasoned, balanced arguments
- **using a range of forms of expression** (such as art and design, music, dance, drama, writing and ICT) to communicate their ideas and responses creatively and thoughtfully
- **exploring** the connections between religious education and other subject areas such as the arts, humanities, literature and science.

### Units of Study for Key Stage 3 – Core and School-Designed Units:

- **Christianity:**  
What is meant by the Bible being the 'Word of God'?
- **Christianity, Judaism and Islam:**  
What does it mean to say that 'God is one'?
- **Christianity and Buddhism:**  
To what extent do humans bring suffering into the world?
- **Christianity and Islam:**  
What is truth?
- **Christianity, Hinduism and humanism:**  
Is this world all there is?
- **Christianity, Judaism and Islam:**  
How diverse are we?
- **Multi-faith:**  
Is it possible to live in a prejudice-free society?
- **Sikhism:**  
How important is belief in equality to Sikhs and others?
- **Judaism:**  
Is it possible to know what is right?

#### **plus**

- **Nine School-Designed Units for RE**  
(of which 50% must have a focus upon Christianity, though not exclusively).

## Programme of Study for Key Stages 4 and 5 (age 14-19)

### Curriculum Aims

Learning and teaching activities in Religious Education (RE) contribute to the achievement of curriculum aims for all young people to become:

- **successful learners** who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve
- **confident individuals** who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives
- **responsible citizens** who make a positive contribution to society.

### The Value of RE to pupils 14-19

Through these RE courses, pupils gain access to many valuable learning opportunities, including enabling pupils to:

- flourish individually, within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society and in the global community
- develop personalised learning skills
- develop attitudes of respect for all in a plural society.

**The Syllabus Support Materials on the accompanying disc provide guidance and assistance for teachers' planning.**

## Curriculum Opportunities

During the 14-19 phase, pupils should be offered the following opportunities that are integral to their learning in RE and enhance their engagement with the concepts, processes and content of the subject. The curriculum should provide opportunities for pupils to:

- discuss, explore and question concepts, images and practices
- visit places of worship, inter-faith centres or other spiritual places, learning from worship or rituals, as appropriate
- discuss, reflect on and develop arguments about philosophical and ethical issues
- reflect on the importance of engagement in community projects, dialogue or social action, reflecting on its importance for themselves and others
- encounter and engage with people from different religious, cultural and philosophical groups, to explore a range of convictions on religious and moral issues
- evaluate concepts, practices and issues, paying attention to beliefs and experience, and using reasoned, balanced arguments
- use a range of forms of expression to communicate their ideas and responses, including exploring and recording how their thoughts, feelings and experiences have changed
- access the sources, images and sounds that are key to their study, using texts and ICT as appropriate
- explore the connections between RE and other subject areas.

## The Key Concepts

Teachers need to provide learning for pupils in relation to the key concepts that underpin the study of RE in order to deepen and broaden their knowledge, skills and understanding.

### Learning about Religion and Belief (AT1)

Pupils should be able to:

- **investigate and interpret** significant issues in the light of their own identities, experiences and commitments
- **present** coherent, detailed arguments about beliefs, ethics, values and issues, with independence and critical awareness of their methods of study
- **use and develop** specialist vocabulary and critical arguments, with awareness of their power, limitations and ambiguity
- **use and evaluate** the rich, varied forms of creative expressions in religious life.

### Learning from Religion and Belief (AT2)

Pupils should be able to:

- **reflect** critically on their opinions in the light of their learning about religions, beliefs and questions
- **develop** their independent values and attitudes on moral and spiritual issues related to autonomy, identities, rights and responsibilities
- **evaluate** issues, beliefs, commitments and the influence of religion, including philosophical, spiritual and ethical perspectives
- **use skills** of critical enquiry, creative problem-solving and communication through a variety of media to respond to issues of identity, meaning and values in a wide range of contexts.

## The legal requirements for RE at Key Stage 4

Provision of RE is a legal requirement for all pupils on the school roll. Seventy hours of tuition across Key Stage 4 is the normal requirement by which learners can achieve the standards of the GCSE Short Course in Religious Studies. This is the benchmark for RE provision in Cambridgeshire.

Schools must select options which enable pupils to study Christianity and at least one other religion. It is good practice for pupils to learn about the religions and beliefs of their own community and from their own perspective.

**The requirements of the syllabus are met where pupils take a GCSE course in Religious Studies (or equivalent) from a national awarding body where Christianity and one other religion are studied.**

Any pupil following one of the nationally accredited courses below is deemed to have met the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus:

1. A GCSE (full course) in Religious Studies which is based on the study of Christianity and at least one other major religion
2. A GCSE (short course) in Religious Studies which is based on the study of Christianity and at least one other major religion
3. A CoEA (Certificate of Educational Achievement) in Religious Education, which is based on the study of Christianity and at least one other major religion
4. ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network).

Currently, such courses are available from all the national awarding bodies: AQA, OCR, Edexcel and WJEC. There is a wide range of options and combinations of religions and topics to be studied. Schools must teach RE using the specifications of a GCSE (short or full) Religious Studies course or ASDAN.

The Agreed Syllabus does not, of course, require that pupils be entered for this examination: that is a matter for schools.

Academic examinations and qualifications in RE are valuable for further studies, academic and graduate learning and careers from law, social work, public services, education and communication.

**Where schools wish to provide core Religious Education for Key Stage 4 in some other way, they are required to share their Schemes of Work or plans with Cambridgeshire SACRE, by writing to the clerk to the SACRE committee at:**

**Clerk to Cambridgeshire SACRE**

**Cambridgeshire Advisory Service**

**Stanton House**

**Stanton Way**

**Huntingdon**

**Cambridgeshire**

**PE29 6XL**

## Religious Education for All 16-19 Year-Olds

All schools with pupils aged 16-19 on roll are required to provide an RE entitlement for these pupils, irrespective of which examination courses they may choose. This core entitlement for all pupils is seen in this Agreed Syllabus as an enrichment of curriculum studies: it takes its place alongside key skills, critical thinking, sex education and citizenship studies, all of which the school will also provide for students in this age range. The allocation of curriculum time for RE should be clearly identifiable and should avoid tokenism.

At this stage, learning opportunities should be focused upon a range of religions, beliefs and views of life appropriate to the students and the selected curriculum content, having regard to prior learning and the value of both depth and breadth in studying religions. Schools may plan their provision for the key stage including topics selected from those listed below or designed by the school in line with all the general requirements of the syllabus.

There is considerable flexibility for schools in devising Programmes of Study for 16-19s, and the units of study can be delivered in various ways, including through core and enrichment programmes of study, general studies, examined courses, as day conferences or through integrated work in a number of subjects.

The Agreed Syllabus Conference wishes to draw attention to the SCAA / QCA publication 'Religious Education 16-19' (reference: RE/95/299, ISBN: 1 85838 074 X) as a useful source of guidance for schools. A copy of this booklet is included on the Agreed Syllabus Support Materials disc.

**There are ten suggested topics with questions in the syllabus. Over a total of 15 hours in the key stage, pupils should cover two of these topic areas.**

Schools may plan topics selected from those listed below or designed by the school in line with all the general requirements of the syllabus. There is considerable flexibility for schools in devising programmes of study for 16-19s, and the units of study can be delivered in various ways, including through core and enrichment programmes of study, general studies, examined courses, as day conferences or through integrated work in a number of subjects.

### Suggested Potential Unit Titles for RE (16-19)

- **Religion in Film and Media:**  
What stereotypes and prejudices are apparent? What is the best kind of religious broadcasting? How does, and how should, the media represent religious and spiritual ideas and communities? How is spirituality dealt with in some recent films? How is Judaism, Islam, Buddhism or atheism represented in film? What vision of human nature does a notable film offer?
- **The Ethics of Birth and Death:**  
Is 'playing God' ever justifiable? What makes a decision about the sanctity of life right or wrong, and who should decide?
- **Good and Evil:**  
Spiritual questions about a world of suffering engendering psychological, philosophical, sociological and theological responses. Why is there evil? What accounts for evil in human life and in the natural world? How can evil be reduced?

- **Science and Faith:**

Complementary or contradictory? Exploring the forms of knowledge in faith and in scientific enquiry and competing accounts of the value of each. What disciplines do we rely on to tell us the truth? How do we know? What are the insights of scientists who are also religious, or those who are atheists?

- **God, Ethics and Sexuality:**

Where do our principles for love and partnership come from? How are they changing? Why is it that sexuality is the source of many of both life's best and worst experiences? How do religious communities express their sex ethics?

- **Inter-Faith Issues:**

How can we build communities of respect for the well-being of all in a religiously plural world? What does the future hold in a globalising and multi-religious world and nation?

- **Adult Spirituality:**

Exploring some spiritual ways of life for grown-up humans. Why are there many people in Britain today who say they are spiritual but not religious? What does this mean?

- **Who Needs God in the 21st Century?**

Examining arguments and experience of atheists and theists. What insights does the study of religious language and philosophy provide into questions about God or ultimate reality?

- **Global Conflict:**

Does religion make peace or make war?  
Examining and analysing the ways in which different religions seek to make peace and are also involved in conflict.

- **Rage or Despair?**

How can our reactions to what is wrong in the world be used to change the world?  
Exploring religious scripture to find insight into contemporary issues.

## Religious Education in Special Schools

Special Schools and Designated Special Provision Units (DSPs) are required to teach the Agreed Syllabus as far as it is practicable. Curriculum entitlement for pupils with SEN means that they should be encouraged to use the syllabus as a resource and select work from the Programmes of Study that is appropriate and practicable.

Pupils in Special Schools have the same entitlement to Religious Education as pupils in mainstream schools. Teachers in Special Schools and DSPs should modify and adapt the Programmes of Study to meet the range of needs of the pupils, which will include profound and multiple learning difficulties, moderate and severe learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural difficulties, and physical disabilities. Expectations of attainment in Religious Education for pupils in Special Schools or DSPs and for those pupils identified with special educational needs in mainstream schools will be different.

For more details and guidance about Religious Education in Special Schools or children with Special Educational Needs, refer to the guidance document 'Religious Education in Special Schools' on the disc.

Assessment is an essential part of everyday teaching and learning in Religious Education.

# Assessment in Religious Education

What is the purpose of assessment in RE?

- to improve planning and delivery by teachers and effective reception by pupils
- to help the diagnosis of problems by teachers
- to share objectives with the pupils as appropriate, so that they understand what is being asked of them
- to ensure that tasks are matched to aims and objectives of the agreed syllabus for RE, and are designed to help pupils make progress toward these.

## Assessment for Learning

### Assessment for Learning (AfL)

The principles of Assessment for Learning are central to effective teaching and learning in RE. AfL is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by the learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there.

## Assessment of Learning

### Assessment of Learning (AoL)

Summative assessment opportunities are built-in occasionally to enable teachers to make judgements of pupils' attainment against the Level Descriptors. However, to be most effective, these opportunities should be designed to contribute to Assessment for Learning.

A good summative assessment will:

- make assessment criteria clear and accessible to pupils
- use a variety of styles of learning and outcomes
- require pupils to reflect on their work against the assessment criteria
- take account of both attainment targets (Learning about Religion and Belief and Learning from Religion and Belief)
- provide specific feedback to pupils to show how improvements can be made.

“It must be inclusive and the children must be taught to listen and respect people of all faiths and none.”

A primary headteacher



## What can be Assessed in RE?

- **Knowledge:** for example, factual knowledge about Christian worship or Muslim observance of Ramadan
- **Understanding:** for example, of concepts such as praise, forgiveness, symbol, deity
- **Skills:** for example, ability to synthesise information about different faiths or aspects of faith.

## Formal Assessment Needs May Differ According to Context

- **Primary** schools often follow the same pattern for RE as for other foundation subjects, and assess pupils as 'achieving', 'working towards' or 'achieving well' in relation to subject expectations
- **Secondary** schools more often expect subject teachers to assess attainment using an eight-level scale
- **Special** schools should use the P Scales, as well as the eight-level scale where appropriate.

## Recording and Reporting

### Recording Assessment

Schools need to keep records of pupils' attainment against the Level descriptors in Religious Education. Records should be made regularly so that progress can be gauged and monitored. Records can include the retention of evidence, such as a portfolio of classwork. Records should be passed to the next teacher or school.

### Reporting to Parents

Good assessment for, and of, learning will give teachers ample evidence on which to base best fit judgements of pupils' attainment. Information outlined in the Level Descriptors will be helpful in summarising these judgements. The use of levels for reporting to parents is not a requirement – general reporting regulations, applied to all subjects taught, mean that schools must report to parents annually on the child's 'progress and attainment with regard to the subjects of the curriculum' and RE is included in this general requirement. However, the use of the levels for this report is a matter for schools.

“ We want all pupils to feel challenged by religious education, to respond to the fundamental questions about the meaning and purpose of life and find their own answers to their questions. ”

Head of RE Dept in a secondary school

## The Eight-Level Scale and P Scales

### Cambridgeshire's Eight-Level Scale of Expectations in RE

The two Attainment Targets for RE set out the knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils of different abilities and maturities are expected to have by the end of the key stage. The Attainment Targets consist of eight Level descriptors of increasing difficulty, plus a description for Exceptional Performance above Level 8. Each Level descriptor describes the types and range of performance that pupils working at that level should characteristically demonstrate.

**This scale of expectations is a statutory part of the syllabus material as it sets the expectations to which teachers must work and defines the progression in learning that RE envisages.**

The key indicators of attainment in RE are contained in three strands for Attainment Target 1 (Learning about Religion and Belief, below in plain text) and three strands for Attainment Target 2 (Learning from Religion and Belief, below in bold text). They are:

- Knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs, teachings and sources (AT1)
- Knowledge and understanding of religious practices and lifestyles (AT1)
- Knowledge and understanding of ways of expressing meaning (AT1)
- **Skill of asking and responding to questions of identity, diversity and belonging (AT2)**
- **Skill of asking and responding to questions of meaning, purpose and truth (AT2)**
- **Skill of asking and responding to questions of values, commitment and spirituality (AT2)**

The Level Descriptors provide the basis to make judgements about pupils' performance at the end of Key Stages 1, 2 and 3. At Key Stage 4, national qualifications are the main means of assessing attainment in RE.

## Performance Descriptions (P Scales)

For many pupils in Special Schools and Designated Special Provision Units (DSPs), the Level Descriptors will not be an appropriate means to measure their progress. Where pupils' attainment is likely to be below Level One in the Level Description, schools should use the Performance Descriptions. They outline early learning and attainment before Level One in eight levels from P1 to P8.

The Performance Descriptors can be used by teachers in the same way as the Agreed Syllabus Level descriptors to:

- decide which description best fits a pupil's performance over a period of time and in different contexts
- develop or support more focused day-to-day approaches to ongoing teacher assessment by using the descriptions to refine and develop long, medium and short-term planning
- track linear progress towards attainment at Level 1
- identify lateral progress by looking for related skills at similar levels across their subjects
- record pupils' overall development and achievement (for example, at the end of a year or key stage).

## P Levels

P Levels 1-3: **early development** expected across the curriculum

P Levels 4-8: development specifically **related to Religious Education**.

For more details and guidance about using P Levels for Religious Education in Special Schools, or children with Special Educational Needs, refer to the guidance document 'Religious Education in Special Schools' on the disc.

Range of levels within which the great majority of pupils are expected to work		Expected attainment for the majority of pupils at the end of the Key Stage	
Key Stage 1	1 - 3	At age 7	2
Key Stage 2	2 - 5	At age 11	4
Key Stage 3	3 - 7	At age 14	5/6

Assessing attainment at the end of the key stage - the 'best fit':

In deciding on a pupil's level of attainment at the end of the key stage, teachers should judge which description best fits the pupil's performance.

## Eight levels for RE in Cambridgeshire

Level Description	Attainment Target 1: Learning about Religion and Belief	Attainment Target 2: Learning from Religion and Belief (in the light of their learning about religion)
<b>Level 1:</b> Recognising and talking about religion	<b>Pupils:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use some religious words and phrases to recognise and name features of religious life and practice</li> <li>• can recall religious stories, actions and celebrations, and recognise religious symbols, words, gestures and artefacts.</li> </ul>	<b>Pupils:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• express and talk about:</li> <li>• their own experiences, feelings and celebrations</li> <li>• what they find interesting or puzzling</li> <li>• what is of value and concern to themselves and to others.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 2:</b> Identifying religious materials and asking questions	<b>Pupils:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use religious words and phrases to identify religion's importance for some people</li> <li>• begin to show awareness of similarities in religions</li> <li>• retell and suggest meanings for religious stories, actions and symbols</li> <li>• identify how religion is expressed in different ways.</li> </ul>	<b>Pupils:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ask, and respond sensitively to, questions about their own and others' experiences and feelings</li> <li>• recognise that some questions cause people to wonder and are difficult to answer</li> <li>• in relation to matters of right and wrong, recognise their own values and those of others.</li> </ul>

Level Description	Attainment Target 1: Learning about Religion and Belief	Attainment Target 2: Learning from Religion and Belief (in the light of their learning about religion)
<b>Level 3:</b>  <b>Describing religion and making links to their own experiences</b>	<b>Pupils:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use a developing religious vocabulary to describe some key features of religions, recognising similarities and differences</li> <li>• make links between beliefs and sources, including religious stories and sacred texts</li> <li>• begin to identify the impact religion has on believers' lifestyles</li> <li>• describe some forms of religious expression.</li> </ul>	<b>Pupils:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify what influences them, making links between aspects of their own and others' experiences</li> <li>• ask important questions about religious beliefs and lifestyles, linking their own and others' responses</li> <li>• make links between values and commitments, and their own attitudes and behaviour.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 4:</b>  <b>Showing under- standing of religion and applying ideas</b>	<b>Pupils:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use developing religious vocabulary to describe and show understanding of sources, authorities, practices, beliefs, lifestyles, ideas, feelings and experiences</li> <li>• make links between them, and describe some similarities and differences both within and between religions</li> <li>• describe the impact of religion on people's lifestyles</li> </ul>	<b>Pupils:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• raise and suggest answers to questions of sacredness, identity, diversity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments</li> <li>• apply their ideas simply to their own and other people's lives</li> <li>• describe what inspires and influences themselves and others.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 5:</b>  <b>Explaining the impact of religion and expressing their own views of religious questions</b>	<b>Pupils:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use an increasingly wide religious vocabulary to explain the impact of beliefs upon individuals and communities</li> <li>• describe why people belong to religions</li> <li>• know that similarities and differences illustrate distinctive beliefs within and between religions, and suggest possible reasons for this</li> <li>• explain how religious sources are used to provide authoritative answers to ultimate questions and ethical issues, recognising diversity in forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression, within and between religions.</li> </ul>	<b>Pupils:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pose, and suggest answers to, questions of sacredness, identity, diversity, belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, values and commitments, relating them to their own and others' lives</li> <li>• explain what inspires and influences them, expressing their own and others' views on the challenges of belonging to a religion.</li> </ul>

Level Description	Attainment Target 1: Learning about Religion and Belief	Attainment Target 2: Learning from Religion and Belief (in the light of their learning about religion)
<b>Level 6:</b> <b>Interpret religion, giving informed accounts and expressing their own insights</b>	<b>Pupils:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use religious and philosophical vocabulary to explain religions and beliefs, explaining reasons for diversity within and between them</li> <li>• explain why the impact of religions and beliefs upon individuals, communities and societies varies</li> <li>• interpret sources and arguments, explaining different answers, from different traditions to ultimate questions and ethical issues</li> <li>• interpret the significance of different forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression.</li> </ul>	<b>Pupils:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use reasoning and examples to express insights into the relationships between beliefs, authorities, teachings and world issues</li> <li>• express insight into their own and others' views on questions of sacredness, identity, diversity, belonging, meaning, purpose and truth</li> <li>• consider the challenges of belonging to a religion in the contemporary world, focusing on values and commitments.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 7:</b> <b>Showing coherent understanding of religious questions, and accounting for and evaluat- ing responses to religious questions insightfully</b>	<b>Pupils:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use a religious and philosophical vocabulary to show a coherent understanding of a range of religions and beliefs</li> <li>• show a coherent understanding of issues, values and questions of authority, meaning and truth</li> <li>• account for the influence of history and culture on aspects of religious life and practice</li> <li>• account for differences between people within the same religion or tradition</li> <li>• show a coherent understanding of how religion, spirituality and ethics are studied.</li> </ul>	<b>Pupils:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evaluate with insight questions of meaning, purpose and truth and ethical issues</li> <li>• evaluate the significance of religious and other views for understanding questions of human relationships, sacredness, belonging, diversity, identity, society, values and commitments, using appropriate evidence and examples.</li> </ul>

“ I really like RE because you can ask lots of difficult questions and it's fun to learn about other people who are different. ”

Tommy and Hannah, KS 1-2 pupils

Level Description	Attainment Target 1: Learning about Religion and Belief	Attainment Target 2: Learning from Religion and Belief (in the light of their learning about religion)
<b>Level 8:</b>  <b>Analysing and contextualising their understanding of religion and justifying their views</b>	<b>Pupils:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use a religious and philosophical vocabulary to analyse a range of religions and beliefs</li> <li>• analyse religious material with reference to historical, cultural and social contexts</li> <li>• critically evaluate the impact of religions and beliefs on differing communities and societies</li> <li>• analyse differing interpretations of religious, spiritual and moral sources and authorities, using some of the principal methods by which religion, spirituality and ethics are studied</li> <li>• analyse varied forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression.</li> </ul>	<b>Pupils:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• justify their views on a wide range of viewpoints on questions of sacredness, identity, diversity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments</li> <li>• justify their views about religious, spiritual and ethical questions from evidence, arguments, reflections and examples, providing a comprehensive evaluation into the perspectives of others.</li> </ul>
<b>Exceptional Performance:</b>  <b>Synthesise effectively and draw balanced conclusion</b>	<b>Pupils:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use a complex religious, moral and philosophical vocabulary to provide a consistent and detailed analysis of religions and beliefs</li> <li>• evaluate in depth the importance of religious diversity in a plural society</li> <li>• understand how the impact of religion and beliefs on different communities and societies has changed over time</li> <li>• provide a detailed analysis of how religious, spiritual and moral sources are interpreted in different ways, evaluating the principal methods by which religion and spirituality are studied</li> <li>• synthesise effectively their accounts of the varied forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression.</li> </ul>	<b>Pupils:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• analyse in depth a wide range of perspectives on questions of identity, diversity and belonging, meaning, purpose and truth and values and commitments</li> <li>• give independent, well-informed and highly-reasoned insights into their own and others' perspectives on religious and spiritual issues, providing well-substantiated and balanced conclusions.</li> </ul>

# Using Level Descriptors

## 1. Using Levels with Teachers:

When using the scale in action, the following points guide good practice:

- The Agreed Syllabus eight-level scale for RE is to be used to set high standards of learning. It is intended to provide teachers with a supportive professional tool, and to enable teachers to be confident in setting standards in their RE work.
- Teachers will find that using the levels in planning provides a helpful focus for a differentiated curriculum that enables continuity and progression towards the highest possible standards for each pupil.
- Learning activities planned for particular classes will often focus upon a small or particular aspect of pupils' attainment or a single phrase within the level description. The teacher's professional judgement is central to monitoring pupils' progress. Single pieces of work cannot show achievement with regard to the whole level.
- Teachers working together (for example, in the same school or in a 'pyramid' family or cluster of schools) will often find it helpful to discuss the application of the levels in planning and assessing pupils' work. There are work samples that have been levelled to help teachers with assessment. See <http://www.natre.org.uk/qcda/>.
- The transfer of usable, accurate information about achievement between key stages and phases makes a powerful contribution to setting high standards in RE up to the age of 14.

- RE has important aspects, such as its contribution to providing opportunities for spiritual development or developing positive attitudes to those who hold different beliefs to oneself, which are not open to individual assessment using the eight level scale. The Agreed Syllabus recognises this. Schools may want to find other ways to credit and celebrate such achievements.
- This syllabus requires schools to give parents an annual report on each child's attainment and progress in Religious Education, in line with the national reporting requirements of the Department for Education.

## 2. Using Levels with Pupils:

Where schools choose to use the levels to assess evidence of learning by particular pupils, or to mark particular pieces of work, or to report attainment to parents, the following points guide good practice:

- Pupils will usually demonstrate some parts or aspects of a level before they can consistently and securely achieve all that the Level Description includes. Where this is the case, they are working towards the levels described.
- The professional judgement of the teacher of RE about the pupils' achievements is the most important factor in the assessment process: the levels are a tool but the teacher makes the judgements about learning and achievement.
- Pupils may achieve different levels with regard to AT1 and AT2 in RE.
- The use of 'sub-levels' by some schools is not supported by this syllabus. There are dangers in assessment structures modelled on subjects where there are several hours of teaching time per week and applied without thought to RE, where an hour a week is normal. These dangers are, principally, of unmanageable and invalid assessment practice, which serves no purpose in improving pupils' learning.

- Pupils are often able to speak about religious issues at a higher level than they are able to write. Oral evidence of achievement through speaking and listening is a significant part of the evidence teachers need in evaluating what pupils can do.
- There are some significant difficulties attached to using the levels for regular feedback to children about their week-to-week work. For example, there is no incentive in getting 'Level 3' week after week, and pupils will not learn much from such general feedback. Teachers are encouraged to give pupils informative, clear and diagnostic feedback.

## The Ladder of Skills Eight-Level Scale for RE: A Basic Tool

	AT1 Learning <i>about</i> Religion and Belief	AT2 Learning <i>from</i> Religion and Belief
8	Analyse and contextualise...	Synthesise and justify their views...
7	Account for, show coherent understanding...	Evaluate critically and personally...
6	Interpret	Express insights...
5	Explain (why, similarities and differences)...	Express views (in the light of religious teaching)...
4	Show understanding...	Apply ideas...
3	Describe...	Make links...
2	Identify, retell...	Recognise, respond sensitively...
1	Recall, name...	Talk about...

In using this simplified levelling tool, teachers are advised to make reference back to the complete wording of the scale for fuller application to task-setting and to weighing up pupils' achievements.

Good teaching will share the appropriate skills with pupils and make explicit opportunities, through well-designed learning opportunities for pupils to acquire, practice and develop these central skills in RE.

# An Example of Progression Through Eight Levels: Islamic and Christian Festivals and Celebrations

Level	Examples add content to the levels and are written to inform teachers' planning
1	I can <b>name</b> Christmas and Eid al Fitr, and <b>talk about</b> my own special days.
2	I can <b>retell a story</b> of the giving of the Qur'an or of the birth of Jesus. I can respond <b>sensitively</b> to moments, feelings or characters in the story for myself.
3	I can <b>describe</b> what happens at Eid in a mosque, or at Christmas in a church. I can <b>link this up</b> to some feelings and experiences that I share (e.g. feeling joyful, feeling excited, feeling sad, feeling togetherness, feeling the power of memory).
4	I can <b>show my understanding</b> of words like 'celebrate', 'messenger', 'miracle' or 'revelation'. I can <b>apply the idea</b> of celebration and / or revelation to two religions and to my own life, dealing thoughtfully with questions: 'What's worth celebrating today?' or 'How do religious stories of revelation make a difference to people's lives?' or 'How can you tell that memory is important in religious festivals?'
5	I can use the right words to <b>explain why</b> Eid and Christmas are similar, and explain three differences between them. I can <b>express my view</b> about whether religious people should be given a day off work for a major festival in the UK today, referring to religious teaching, giving reasons and examples.
6	I can <b>interpret</b> some sources and meanings of two festivals for myself, referring to sacred texts directly (e.g. Hadith, Gospel). I can develop and <b>express insights</b> into the varied impact of faith: What could anyone learn from the Muslims and Christians about celebration? Does everyone need to celebrate something? Why are Eid and Christmas some of the most popular occasions for members of the religion? How can we explain the fact that some non-religious people join in with religious celebrations?
7	I can comprehensively understand and <b>account for</b> how Christmas has become a kind of 'plural festival' and coherently understand how Eid in the UK is different from Eid in Pakistan or Egypt. I can <b>evaluate, personally and critically</b> , the reasons why the festivals are the most popular parts of a religious life, using methods from different disciplines. I can take examples from Christianity and Islam e.g. why do more people go to Church at Christmas? Why is Eid important in British Islam?
8	I can <b>analyse</b> different points of view about the festivals using sociological and theological methods and ideas and being alert to the contexts of religious celebrations. I can <b>justify my view</b> about whether non-believers should join in religious festivals or not, in a profound way.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1

### Teaching about many religions and beliefs

In the context of RE in school, interfaith issues may be focused around questions and issues which arise in the RE classroom such as:

- What areas of agreement and co-operation are there between religions in the fields of ethics, human rights, social matters and so on?
- Why do religious communities sometimes come into conflict?
- What is the history of the relationship between different faith communities such as Hindus and Sikhs, Christians and Jews?
- What common understandings of theological and philosophical questions are to be found between, for example, Sikhs, Muslims and Christians, or between Buddhists, Hindus and Jains?
- In what ways do different religions approach questions about the truth, the nature of reality, the examination of human knowledge of the ultimate / the absolute / the divine? What conversation occurs between faiths about these questions?
- What relationships are there between religions and non-religious life stances such as humanism?
- Why does religion often appear to be a factor in political or national conflict?
- What contributions do religions make to reconciliation and the resolution of conflict?
- How do religious believers contribute to peace and harmony, tolerance and respect, between different faith communities?
- What is interfaith dialogue? What attitudes to dialogue can be found? What can be achieved by dialogue?
- For what purposes, and in what ways (including RE itself) do different religious groups co-operate in our local or national community life?
- What can individuals and society learn from addressing interfaith issues in RE?
- What future for religions can be envisaged in the global community? Is the future one of co-operation, conflict or both?
- What contributions can religions make (through co-operation?) to tackling the challenges which face the human race, such as those posed by environmental change, poverty and inequality and international conflict?

These are difficult and demanding questions for teachers and pupils to tackle, but they need to be brought into the RE classroom if RE is to relate effectively to the society and the world in which children and their religious communities find themselves today.

(‘Inter Faith Issues and the Religious Education Curriculum’ (2001), pp 33-34, reproduced by kind permission of Lat Blaylock and the Inter Faith Network for the UK)

## Appendix 2

### Guidance for Pupils Gifted and Talented (G&T) in Religious Education

The following guidance is offered to schools when planning Religious Education for Gifted and Talented pupils. It is important that schools identify such pupils and ensure that provision for their learning needs is made. This guidance is developed from work originally produced by QCA in 2002.

#### Identifying Gifted Pupils

Pupils who are gifted and talented in Religious Education are likely to:

- Show high levels of insight into, and discernment beyond, the obvious and ordinary
- Make sense of, and draw meaning from, religious symbol, metaphor, text and practice
- Be sensitive to, or aware of, the numinous or the mystery of life, and have a feeling for how these are explored and expressed
- Understand, apply and transfer ideas and concepts across topics in Religious Education and into other religious and cultural contexts
- Evaluate, interpret, analyse and synthesise their religious, spiritual and ethical insights in ways beyond the normal age-related expectations.

In more general terms, they may also:

- Have highly developed skills of comprehension, analysis and research
- Show quickness of understanding and depth of thought.

The identification of pupils who are gifted and talented in Religious Education should be approached on the basis of distinct Religious Education ability, skills, competencies and insights. The teacher's professional judgment is crucial.

Gifted and talented in Religious Education is not the same as being religiously gifted. Teachers may find it helpful to consider how being gifted and talented in Religious Education compares with being gifted and talented in sport, music, mathematics or poetry.

#### Setting Suitable Learning Challenges

It is important that the full range and scope of Religious Education activities and learning experiences give pupils access to high levels of attainment. When planning activities, teachers will need to be sensitive to pupils' preferred learning styles and give them a variety of opportunities to learn. Pupils with high levels of language skills may need to develop a conceptual framework through which to acquire relevant information and understand its significance and use.

In order to appropriately challenge pupils who are gifted / talented in Religious Education teachers should:	For example:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use a variety of challenging questioning strategies to encourage pupils to explore religious phenomena and questions.</li> </ul>	<p>Why? What if? What is this like? How does this differ from?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set extension tasks that avoid repetition and extra work but encourage greater depth of understanding or reflection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“What might it mean to a Muslim to be unable to go on Hajj?”</li> <li>If Christians and Muslims discussed what God is like, what would they agree about?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use authentic materials from a faith, such as liturgical and sacred texts or artefacts, to provide a complex stimulus for learning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read the Adhan or the first surah of the holy Qur’an.</li> <li>Ask which Christmas cards are inspired by John’s Gospel.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use carefully planned self-assessment instruments with gifted pupils, to involve them in identifying their own learning needs. This is most useful if it includes a focus on learning from religion and belief, as well as learning about religion and belief.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils analyse their knowledge base, skill at research, ability to explain meaning, skill at application and response to issues in relation to RE topics.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage ambitious work by the most able pupils by using target-setting strategies: can they plan more depth, detail, breadth or argument into their work?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gifted pupils study a religion as practised in a different culture or community, noting variations in belief and practice as compared to UK settings.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on the interpretation of symbol, metaphor, text and story, and the ways in which these stimulate reflection on meaning and discernment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What does it mean to say that a scripture is “inspired” or “the Word of God” or “the absolute truth”?</li> <li>Why is rest, peace or calm found in worship, Shabbat, spiritual music?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Challenge and develop gifted pupils’ use of spoken and written religious language, with both sacred texts and general literature.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils make connections between the Psalms and the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins or George Herbert.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teach pupils the terminology and language that they need to handle sophisticated religious, spiritual, ethical and philosophical questions, ideas and materials, and allow for them to develop and use that language.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils explore arguments about atheism distinguishing between concept, theory, belief, faith, fact and between superstition, opinion, evidence and proof.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on the application of ideas and learning in new or unfamiliar contexts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils compare Christianity in Latin America and Europe or Islam in Britain and Pakistan.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the ultimate or fundamental questions that lie below the surface of religious practice to open up the ways in which pupils might learn from religion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils relate funeral rites and issues of purpose in life, or marriage customs and the importance of community and family.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use questions and tasks from later key stages and stimulate responses through difficult tasks (for example, involve argument, analysis and prediction).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils at KS1 and 2 use Philosophy for Children methods with RE stimuli. KS3 pupils tackle GCSE questions which involve argument, analysis and prediction.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage gifted and talented pupils to make connections between their work in Religious Education and other subjects.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils are taught to link RE with cosmology in Physics, worship in Music, ethics in PSHE, leadership in History and inequality in Geography.</li> </ul>

Teachers can also use a range of general strategies with pupils who are gifted and talented in Religious Education across a variety of age groups and learning contexts, both within and beyond the formal curriculum. These include:

- providing challenging reading materials in a topic-related, classroom book collection related to a particular Religious Education unit
- providing a short list of challenging topics for each unit, to encourage gifted and talented pupils to respond to Religious Education themes such as worship and authority
- providing extension tasks in groups, to encourage the most able to challenge each other
- tasks and activities that emphasise evaluation of religious diversity
- linking with local faith communities whose children bring particular experience, nurture or quality to their Religious Education, and opening the frontier between the education offered by the community and the school
- using ICT and internet or intranet links to enable pupils to work with other schools and to learn from members of religious communities, for pupils to engage with story, symbolism, metaphor and analogy. Links between Religious Education and philosophy should attract the interest of many Religious Education specialists
- including higher-order language skills, such as the nuance of words and the use or analogy in Religious Education. Strategies to challenge the most able language users are part of enabling the highest achievement of gifted pupils.

It is particularly important to plan to avoid repetitious work: the learning diet of gifted and talented pupils must not feel like 'more of what we did before'. Gifted and talented pupils may need less reinforcement than many other pupils but they often get more! Offer the most able pupils a new context in which to apply their understanding of belief, or an additional concept around belief (such as "belief in..." as well as "belief that...").

# Acknowledgements

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