



milton keynes council

Milton Keynes Locally Agreed RE Syllabus 2017 - 2022

Supplementary Guidance

Information to support excellent RE teaching and learning in Milton Keynes



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The aims of this guidance material

This guidance material has been produced by Milton Keynes SACRE to offer additional help to teachers engaged in delivering the revised Religious Education syllabus (2017-2022). The advice in this document is not statutory, but aims to engage teachers with the wider complexities of Religious Education and the current debate, as well as offering a wider range of resource links and teaching suggestions.

There is much evidence that the school curriculum is enhanced, and pupil achievement is raised, through developing the rigorous study of religion and philosophy. The value of religious education (RE) needs to be enhanced, as a knowledge-rich approach to the study of religion and philosophy can improve outcomes for pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils, in GCSE English literature, for example. This document aims to highlight the importance of RE and inspire all schools in Milton Keynes to use the syllabus to create thoughtful and intelligent RE. Coherent sequencing of lessons ensures that all pupils can receive quality RE which prepares them for the world of work and equips them with deep critical thinking skills. The intention is that teachers will be empowered and trusted to develop their own models of how best to teach RE using this guidance.

With the challenges facing society, and the new RE curriculum in Key Stage 4 and 5, teachers need to provide more depth in RE. Powerful RE lessons that develop all pupils' fundamental thinking skills will have long-term impact on how pupils experience and understand their own community. No pupil in Milton Keynes should be excluded from accessing this knowledge and primary schools must lay the foundations for later study by equipping pupils with the knowledge and skills and vocabulary that RE provides. RE can satisfy demands for intellectual rigour in the curriculum and religious knowledge equips learners with 'powerful knowledge', thus demonstrating RE's relevance, respectability and rigour.

This guidance has two main sections. The first will provide general background on the place and value of RE in the school curriculum; the second will be more specific to the Milton Keynes' syllabus and provide additional planning material and resources to support teachers. It is intended that additional guidance material will be produced, creating a growing resource for teachers of RE.



Section 1: General Background

The aim of RE and the current debate

The aim of RE is to help pupils to engage confidently, constructively and reflectively with beliefs, values and lifestyles in a religiously diverse world.

A religiously educated pupil in Milton Keynes must have had the opportunity to acquire knowledge and understanding of a range of religious and non-religious world views held in the present day. They should acquire knowledge and understanding of how religious traditions have shaped the identity of Milton Keynes, including Christianity and the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. All pupils should develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures. They should be given the opportunity to develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about issues arising from the study of religions and reflect on their own beliefs, values and experiences as part of their study.

There is currently a national debate about the role and purpose of RE; this guidance material cannot hope to cover the nuances of this discussion. Teachers are encouraged to keep themselves up to date as far as possible and the links below lead to the websites and documents at the forefront of this discussion.

A new Settlement for Religion and Belief in Schools:

<http://faithdebates.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/A-New-Settlement-for-Religion-and-Belief-in-schools.pdf>

RE for Real:

<https://www.gold.ac.uk/media/documents-by-section/departments/research-centres-and-units/research-units/faiths-and-civil-society/REforREal-web-b.pdf>

The Woolf Institute report on Faith and Belief in Britain:

<https://corablivingwithdifference.files.wordpress.com/2015/12/living-with-difference-online.pdf>

The NATRE state of the Nation Report into Secondary RE:

<https://www.natre.org.uk/uploads/Free%20Resources/SOTN%202017%20Report%20web%20version%20FINAL.pdf>

The Interim report from the Commission on RE:

<https://www.commissiononre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Commission-on-Religious-Education-Interim-Report-2017.pdf>

Guidance on Diversity of Religion and Belief by Peter Hemming:

<https://tinyurl.com/ycjuafhs>



The place of RE in the wider school curriculum

Youth SACRE joint statement:

We want to see better RE teaching in Milton Keynes. It is the only subject where we can explore our deeper questions about others and ourselves. We would like all headteachers to take this subject seriously. RE makes us open our minds and teaches us how to accept differences. RE will contribute to a more open and tolerant society.

RE plays an important role in a broad and balanced curriculum. This is not just a matter of subject knowledge and content, but also skills, attitudes and values. The school curriculum aims to provide opportunities for all pupils to learn and achieve. It is intended that all pupils will become successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve. Therefore,

- RE should be stimulating, interesting and enjoyable. The knowledge, skills and understanding outlined in the Non-Statutory National Framework for RE (QCA, 2004), and further developed in the Religious Education Council's revised framework in 2013, are designed to promote the best possible progress and attainment for all pupils. RE develops independent and interdependent learning. It contributes to pupils' skills in literacy and ICT. RE promotes an enquiring approach in which pupils carefully consider issues of beliefs and truth in religion and enhances the capacity to think coherently and consistently. This enables pupils to evaluate their own and others' views in a reasoned and informed manner.
- Schools should ensure that pupils achieve in RE at least in line with national expectations. Attainment and progression in RE should be recorded and reported to parents annually.

Many of the skills developed in RE can be used in other curriculum areas, particularly in English and the humanities, but higher order thinking skills and the principles of critical analysis are transferable to almost every area of the curriculum. In a coherent curriculum there will be many cross-curricular links.

What follows are some suggested ways that RE can contribute to the wider school curriculum:

RE transferable skills

- Identify questions and define enquiries, using a range of methods, media and sources
- Carry out and develop enquiries by gathering, comparing, interpreting and analysing a range of information ideas and viewpoints
- Present findings, suggest interpretations, express ideas and feelings and develop arguments
- Use empathy, critical thought and reflection to evaluate learning and how it might apply to pupils' own and others' lives
- Engage in debate and dialogue, coping with diverse opinions.

Attitudes developed by effective RE

- Open-mindedness, which in RE includes pupils
 - Being willing to learn and gain new understanding
 - Engaging in argument or disagreeing reasonably and respectfully, without belittling or abusing others, about religious, moral and spiritual questions
 - Being willing to go beyond surface impressions
 - Distinguishing between opinions, viewpoints and beliefs in connection with issues of conviction and faith.
- Appreciation and wonder, which in RE includes pupils
 - Developing their imagination and curiosity
 - Recognising that knowledge is bounded by mystery
 - Appreciating the sense of awe and wonder at the world in which they live
 - Developing their capacity to respond to questions of meaning and purpose.
- Appreciation of changing nature of society, including
 - Changes in religious practice and expression
 - The growing importance of human rights
 - The influence of religion in the local, national and global community.
- Self-awareness and positive self-regard, enabling pupils to
 - Feel confident about their own beliefs and identity
 - Share them without embarrassment or fear of ridicule
 - Develop a realistic and positive sense of their own religious, moral and spiritual ideas
 - Recognise their own uniqueness as human beings
 - Grow more sensitive to the impact of their ideas and behaviour on other people.
- Respect for all, which includes pupils
 - Developing skills of listening to/learning from others, even when others' views are different from their own
 - Being ready to value difference and diversity for the common good, and to see them as learning opportunities
 - Appreciating that some beliefs are not inclusive and considering the issues that this raises for individuals and society
 - Being prepared to recognise and acknowledge their own bias
 - Being sensitive to the feelings and ideas of others
 - Forming and maintaining positive relationships.

Values promoted by RE

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

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

RE has a significant role in the promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. At the heart of the Milton Keynes' syllabus is a focus on ultimate questions and ethical issues. This focus enables pupils to appreciate their own and others' beliefs and cultures and how these impact

on individuals, communities, societies and cultures. RE seeks to develop pupils' awareness of themselves and others. This helps pupils to gain a clear understanding of the significance of religions and beliefs in the world today and learn about the ways different faith communities relate to each other.

Spiritual development promoted by RE

- 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
- Developing pupils' own views and ideas on religious and spiritual issues
- Valuing relationships and developing a sense of belonging.

Moral development promoted by RE

- Valuing diversity and engaging in issues of truth, justice and trust
- Exploring the influence of family, friends and media on moral choices and practices 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 core beliefs and teachings from religions about values and ethical codes of practice
- Studying a range of ethical issues, including those that focus on justice, to promote racial and religious respect and personal integrity
- Considering the importance of rights and responsibilities and developing the conscience.

Social development promoted by RE

- 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.

The following ideas can be incorporated into lessons by using powerful images or art and media to promote social development:

- Investigate social issues from religious perspectives, recognising the diversity of viewpoints within and between religions as well as the common ground
- Allow pupils to consider how religious and non-religious beliefs lead to particular actions and concerns on topics. This could link to areas of the curriculum already in place.
- Encourage pupils to articulate their own and others' ideas on a range of contemporary social issues. This can be through debates and discussions.

- Develop pupils' knowledge and understanding about the diversity of national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom and the need for mutual respect and understanding
- Encourage pupils to think about topical spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues including the importance of resolving conflict fairly through case studies
- Explore the rights, responsibilities and duties of citizens locally, nationally and globally by giving pupils scenarios to consider
- Encourage pupils to justify and defend orally, and in writing, personal opinions about issues, problems and events.

Cultural development promoted by RE

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

Citizenship promoted by RE

- Encouraging a positive contribution to society
- Promoting religious understanding, discernment and respect, and challenge prejudice and stereotyping
- Exploring the significance of the environment, both locally and globally, and the role of human beings and other species within it
- Learning about religious and ethical rules relating to care of self and others, individual and community wellbeing, respect for friends and neighbours
- Learning about authority, ethics, relationships and rights and responsibilities. RE, in this way, supports pupils' needs for a safe community.
- Developing pupils' knowledge and understanding about the diversity of national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom and the need for mutual respect and understanding
- Exploring the importance of resolving conflict fairly and the rights, responsibilities and duties of citizens locally, nationally and globally
- Considering how religious and other beliefs lead to particular actions and concerns and investigating social issues from religious perspectives



For further ideas visit: <http://www.citizenshipfoundation.org.uk/>

Personal, social, health and economic education promoted by RE

- Learning about what is fair and unfair, right and wrong and being encouraged to share their opinions
- Developing a healthy, safer lifestyle and how this can be done by learning about religious beliefs and teachings on drug use and misuse, food and drink, leisure, relationships and human sexuality

Learning about the purpose and value of religious beliefs and sensitivities in relation to sex education

Learning about the diversity of different ethnic and religious groups teaches pupils about the destructive power of prejudice, challenging racism, discrimination, offending behaviour and bullying.

Exploring morals and decision-making and the ethics of a wide range of issues. It also explores matters relating to spiritual growth and well-being, prayer, meditation, enlightened thinking, spiritual rituals etc. In this way, RE supports children's mental health and wellbeing.

- Learning about religious and ethical rules surrounding the use of money. This encourages learning about equality, justice, prejudice, discrimination, human rights, fair trade, the environment and climate change.
- Learning about religious issues in the workplace, such as diet, clothing, use of time for prayer, values and attitudes is essential for preparing young people for the world of work
- Learning about the work of religious and non-religious charities
- Developing skills of listening, empathy and group collaboration
- Exploring religious responses to poverty and need
- Discussing the place of philanthropy and generosity in society.

Human Rights and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 9 of the Human Rights Act 1998 and Article 2 of the First Protocol protect the rights of European citizens in relation to freedom of thought and conscience are important. Articles 14 and 30 of the UNCRC enshrine the rights of children to follow their own beliefs.

- Article 9 ensures that European citizens have rights to 'freedom of thought, conscience and religion'. This right includes freedom of expression in relation to one's own beliefs and freedom to change one's religion.
- Article 2 of the First Protocol expects the state to 'respect the right of parents to ensure such education or teaching in conformity with their religious and philosophical convictions'.
- Article 14 of the UNCRC states that children have the right to choose their own religion and beliefs. Parents should help children decide what is right and wrong, and what is best for them.
- Article 30 of the UNCRC states that children have the right to practice their own culture, language and religion - or any they choose. Minority and indigenous groups need special protection of this right.

These rights are subject to certain restrictions. The delivery and teaching of religious education must be sensitive to the rights of parents and pupils. It is not the place of teachers to belittle or deride the beliefs of parents and pupils and it is not appropriate that a teacher represents their views as unchallengeable when it comes to their own religious or philosophical beliefs. It is not the aim of the Agreed Syllabus to persuade pupils to be religious in the general sense or in any narrow sense. RE should therefore be a safe space, where pupils can present their own views in an age-appropriate setting. There may be times during discussion when it is appropriate to explore religious and philosophical beliefs and non-religious world views not specifically included in the syllabus.

Inclusion and special educational needs

RE can make a significant contribution towards inclusion, particularly in its focus on promoting respect for all.

It has a role in challenging stereotypical views and appreciating differences in others. It enables pupils to consider the impact of peoples' beliefs on their own actions and lifestyle. It can also help to develop pupils' self-esteem.

Teachers should choose appropriate content from the key questions in the syllabus. Professional judgement and personal knowledge of the pupils will inform practice. Similarly, studying more than one religion may overload some pupils with facts, so if appropriate, only one religion may be studied. Over time though, pupils should be exposed to an appropriate range of religions, with Christianity as the predominant religion covered in each key stage. The three strands of 'believing, behaving and belonging' offer teachers a wide range of beliefs and practices that can be explored with pupils with special educational needs and/or disability.

The syllabus allows for a flexible approach. The school may well decide it is more fitting to have short sessions more frequently during the week; the 'little and often' approach. A more active and varied lesson will help these pupils gain from their experience of RE.

Effective inclusion requires the teaching of a lively, stimulating RE curriculum that:

- Builds on and is enriched by the differing experiences pupils bring to RE
- Meets all pupils' learning needs, including those with learning difficulties or who are more able, 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
- Supports access to text, such as through prepared tapes, particularly when working with significant quantities of written materials or at speed
- Helps pupils to communicate their ideas through methods other than extended writing. For example, pupils may demonstrate their understanding through speech or the use of ICT.
- May be accessible in a non-visual way for accessing sources of information when undertaking research in aspects of RE; for example, by using audio material and multi-sensory, experiential approaches.

The Agreed Syllabus for Milton Keynes is the RE entitlement for all pupils in maintained schools and, therefore, the core principles of inclusion should be applied for all pupils:

- Learning should be suitably challenging
- Pupils' diverse learning needs should be respected
- Potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils should be overcome where possible
- Teachers need to be aware of and sensitive to the background and personal circumstances of their pupils, especially where sensitive issues, such as death are raised
- It is expected that teachers of pupils with special educational needs will modify the RE provision to meet the diverse needs of the individual pupil; making the pupils' experience of RE meaningful.

Teachers of children with special educational needs will broadly need to follow the three core principles outlined below:

- Be sensitive to and meet the needs of the individual pupil

- Set challenging tasks, but have realistic expectations of what they can do and celebrate their responses
- Take account of their ability and special educational needs.

Some pupils will be able to work factually, but be unable to relate to feelings and meanings. Others will find factual detail confusing and will need a more sensory and experiential approach in their RE lessons. It is up to the teacher's professional judgement and personal knowledge of the pupil to decide how best to meet the needs of individual pupils. For example, some pupils will have short concentration spans and so will not cope with extensive reading, research and writing.

Anne Krisman writes extensively on RE for pupils with special needs and is a contributor to RE Online. Follow this link for a useful report:

<http://www.reonline.org.uk/news/5-keys-into-re/>

Pupils in special schools are referred to in the Education Act 1993, which states:

'Every pupil attending a special school will, so far as is practicable.....receive religious education unless the child's parents have expressed a wish to the contrary. It is for schools to decide what is practicable but, in general terms, the Secretary of State would expect the question of practicability to relate to the special educational needs of the pupils and not to problems of staffing or premises.'



Section 2: Syllabus specific support material

Making more time for RE in the primary school

Religious education should be 5% of curriculum time for Community and Controlled schools in any one academic year. Governing bodies of Voluntary Aided schools who adopt the syllabus may set aside up to 10% of curriculum time for the delivery of RE, ensuring it has the appropriate denominational focus.

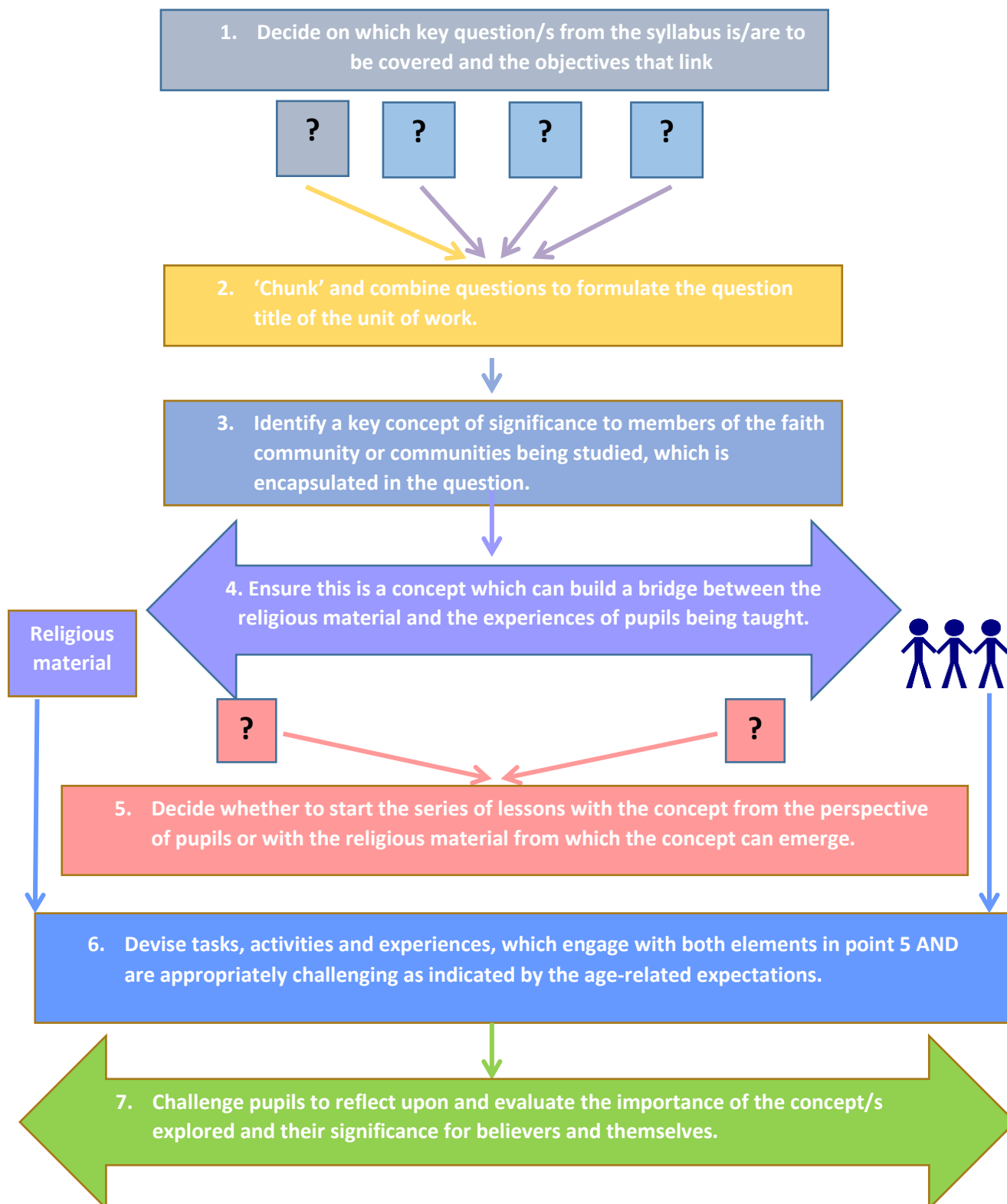
The revised syllabus is based on the expectation that sufficient time is devoted to teaching RE to enable teachers to deliver the requirements of the syllabus. Some schools may find it difficult to devote the required time to RE on a weekly basis. Here are some suggestions for ways to increase RE provision:

- Use religious material in English lessons. Where the focus of a unit of work requires pupils to be familiar with a text (often a story of some kind) this could be covered in an English lesson, using the usual literacy skills that would be employed in the study of a text. Ensure that learning objectives and marking have both RE and English criteria.
- Follow up discussion in RE with a longer piece of writing in an English lesson. Not only will this increase the time being given to RE, but it will allow pupils to produce higher quality extended writing across the curriculum. Ensure that there are learning objectives that meet both English and RE criteria.
- Teach some RE in blocks. This will give opportunities to explore a topic or concept in more depth, as well as allowing more time for RE. It is important not to lose sight of the RE objectives when teaching in a block though. Filling a block with music, drama, or art creates interesting lessons but ensure that there is appropriate RE learning at the centre.
- Hold additional RE days or weeks, particularly around a religious festival. These can be run by the school, or there are companies such as the Springs Dance Company or Barnabas in Schools who offer themed days.
- Organise a visit day to one or more places of worship. See the section on guidance for organising visits to places of worship and inviting visitors into school (p.27 of this document).
- Carry out an audit of the whole school curriculum to see where religious material is included, and where religious content is discussed. Subjects that easily make cross-curricular links to RE are art, music, PSHE, English and history, but mathematics and science can also have connections, particularly with pattern and symmetry, or the questions of science and evolution.

Extended guidance on planning

A sample unit

The revised Milton Keynes Syllabus suggests a 7-Step planning process on p20 and is included again here.



This worked example of planning takes a popular topic for primary schools, “The Parables of Jesus”. The order of the first three steps can be varied depending on whether the syllabus questions are used as the starting point for the planning, or whether the teacher is beginning with a topic that is already taught, and which needs to be brought into line with the syllabus.

1. Decide on which key questions from the syllabus are to be covered

A unit on the parables of Jesus for a KS2 class may address the following syllabus questions:

- How do sacred texts and other sources help people to understand God, the world and human life? (Believing)
- What influences the way people behave and what is expected of a person in following a religion or belief? (Behaving)

Refer to the age-related expectations (p30-31 in the Locally Agreed RE Syllabus) and choose the appropriate outcomes

For Year 4 these are the relevant outcomes:

- Make links between the texts studied and the practice of faith in the community
- Describe beliefs that have the greatest impact on practice
- Raise questions and suggest answers about the way that the key beliefs studied influence the attitudes and values of wider society
- Make links between the teachings of religious figures and current leaders
- Suggest how the stories and teachings studied might make a difference to the way the pupils think and behave
- Decide what pupils will need to know by the end of the unit if they are to achieve the outcomes.

For example, they must know:

- the story of at least three parables
- know what a parable is
- know that these parables were told by Jesus
- know that they are in the Bible
- know that Christians still read them
- understand the words ‘commitment’ and/or ‘discipleship’
- be able to link the parables to some aspects of Christians practice
- and show how the parables influence the choices that some Christians make about how to live.

2. Chunk and combine questions to formulate the “Big Question” for the unit

Combining the ideas of believing and behaving on the topic of the parables may create the following suggested questions (there are other possibilities):

- How do the parables of Jesus encourage Christians to show commitment?
- To what extent do the parables of Jesus encourage Christians to be good disciples?
- How well do the parables of Jesus show Christians how to live?
- How do the parables of Jesus influence the actions of the church?
- How well do the parables of Jesus help Christians to understand how God wants them to live?

3. Identify the key concepts

In a unit on parables the following concepts are appropriate: discipleship, commitment, and the kingdom of God. Others may also be relevant but may not be the focus; such as, authority and belonging. Choose the concept that is going to be most age appropriate, as well as bearing in mind prior learning.

4. Ensure this is a concept that builds a bridge between the religious material and the pupils

Pupils learn best when they can see the relevance of the religious material to their own lives. This topic could be an opportunity to explore how they show commitment in everyday life, through sport, school or family.

5. Decide whether to start from the religious perspective or from the perspective of the pupils.

The choice of whether to begin with religious material or familiar material will depend on the class and will reflect the resources available.

6. Devise tasks, activities and experiences to enable pupils to interact with the religious materials and concepts.

This is the core of the planning process, but it is important to have completed all the previous steps to ensure that there is a coherent learning experience. The enquiry model (p23 of the Locally Agreed Syllabus) for the teaching cycle will enable students to meet the higher order thinking skills that are so important in RE.

Teachers may decide to begin several lessons with an 'engage' activity. An 'engage' activity helps to bridge the gap for pupils between the religious concept/material and the personal, as well as hooking them into the learning. An 'engage' activity can also be used to baseline assess pupils' current knowledge and give a clearer measure of pupil progress. In this worked example, the 'engage' activities link to the key concept of commitment. Alternative topics for the 'engage' phase could be stories with meaning or guides for life.

Example activities to engage pupils with the concept/topic:

Write 'Commitment' on a large sheet of paper and pupils in groups write down all their ideas.

Give out a series of rules – which ones can the pupils agree to commit to?

Pupils think of ways that people show commitment to something, for example, uniform, standard of behaviour, food laws, or dress code.

Example activities to help pupil enquire into the religious material

Find out what the pupils already know about the way that Christians show commitment. This could work as the baseline activity. Alternatively, find out if the pupils can name, recall or retell any of the parables of Jesus.

Choose appropriate parables to be studied and plan a range of activities that will enable the pupils to achieve the outcomes, ensuring that the steps for the key knowledge are covered. Some parables that can be used to explore issues of commitment and discipleship are the parables of the Lost Pearl (Matthew 13:45-56), the Hidden Treasure (Matthew 13:44) and the Wise and Foolish Builders

(Matthew 7:24-27 and Luke 6:47-49). Other parables will relate to other Christian concepts and can be chosen accordingly.

Read the parables chosen. Focus on the text in several translations of the Bible. Watch some dramatized versions or animations. Examine the differences between the different versions, especially where the same parable occurs in more than one of the Gospels. Interview some Christians to understand how the parables may be interpreted. Explore how some aspects of Christian life may be based upon the teaching of the parables. Explore how Christians and others use the parables as a basis for art and discuss what can be learned from this.

7. Challenge pupils to reflect upon and evaluate the importance of the concept and its significance for believers and themselves

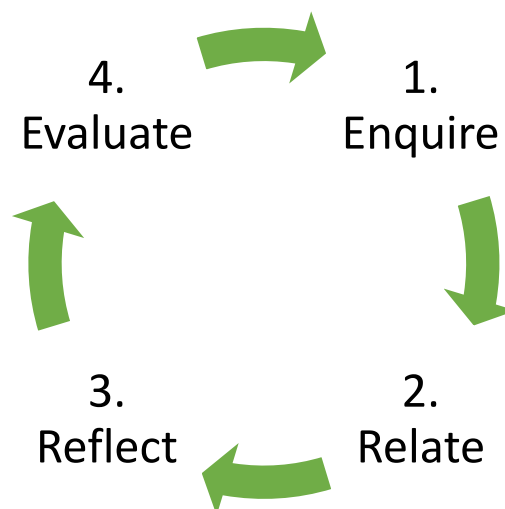
Plan the key questions that will enable the pupils to engage with the initial 'Big Question' and decide how they can demonstrate their learning well. Choose the most appropriate form of recording for the outcomes that pupils are expected to achieve.

These questions might be suitable as a way of encouraging pupils to reflect on their learning:

- Which of the parables best encourages Christians in their discipleship?
- Which of the parables might be most challenging for Christians?
- Could any of the parables act as an encouragement for you?
- Which of the parables do you find most challenging and why?
- Would following the message of any of these parables make the world a better place?

At the end of the unit, record carefully what went well and what needs to be improved for next time. Record the achievement of pupils according to school policy and use the evidence from pupils to plan the next learning steps.

Remember to keep the four elements below at the heart of your teaching. Asking relevant questions, reflecting on and evaluating the answers encountered are the basis of all good RE teaching.



How to choose resources

RE often deals with complex, dynamic and sensitive material. It is possible, and often necessary, particularly for younger and less able pupils, to summarise beliefs and practices clearly. However, care needs to be taken that resources do not contain over-simplifications or omissions that can lead to distortion. Religious traditions are rarely homogeneous, and they develop and change; the best resources will recognise this.

The RE Council offers the following guidance to:

- Support teachers in providing well resourced, good quality RE
- Facilitate the accurate presentation of beliefs and practices across the curriculum, in subjects such as citizenship, sociology, PSHE, geography, and history
- Help teachers navigate the complexities of the subject and avoid misrepresentation and offence
- Foster better understanding of religious beliefs and practices
- Enable adequate research and fact-checking
- Encourage critical evaluation of published resources.

When choosing resources dealing with religion check that they:

- Are factually correct. Look for indications that expert advisers have been consulted at all key production stages, including academics, faith organisations and faith representatives.
- Are sensitive and will not cause offence to pupils and their families
- Convey a fair and balanced view of religious traditions
- Carry an authentic voice
- Check whether resources draw on primary sources, which contribute to accurate representation of religious traditions and may foster pupils' interpretive skills
- Check that the provenance and context of quotations is given, for example, from individuals, sacred texts and other documents
- Ensure that publishers and their sources respect the educational purpose of the resource for example, that they are not trying to convert pupils.

Taken from

<https://www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/resources/documents/guidance-on-selecting-resources/>

Resource suggestions

The EMA Network resource centre carries a wide range of resources for schools to borrow. They can be contacted at the Rivers Centre, Trent Road, West Bletchley, Milton Keynes, MK3 7BB.

Telephone: 01908 270409

Email: ema@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Website: www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/schools-and-lifelong-learning/ethnic-minorityachievement



General RE resources

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-cohesion-and-prevent-how-have-schools-responded>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/religious-education-guidance-in-english-schools-non-statutory-guidance-2010>

<https://www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/resources/documents/re-teachers-media-toolkit/>

<https://www.natre.org.uk/>

<https://www.natre.org.uk/resources>

<https://www.natre.org.uk/about-re/legal-requirements/>

<https://www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/>

<https://www.gov.uk/national-curriculum/other-compulsory-subjects>

<https://www.articlesoffaith.co.uk/>

<https://www.daydreameducation.co.uk/subjects/religious-studies/posters>

www.bbc.co.uk/education

www.reonline.org.uk

www.retoday.org.uk

<http://old.natre.org.uk/db/>

www.funeralwise.com/customs

www.booksatpress.co.uk

<http://www.reonline.org.uk/news/re-definitions/>

Religion specific resources

Buddhism - Weblinks and publications	Artefacts
<p>https://www.clear-vision.org/Schools/Teachers.aspx - Audio visual resources covering many aspects of Buddhism</p> <p>http://www.sheffieldbuddhistcentre.org/download-teaching-materials/ -downloadable teaching resources</p> <p>https://www.thebuddhistsociety.org/page/resources - links to other useful websites on Buddhism</p> <p>https://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/buddhism/index.htm - a range of stories for children</p>	<p>Prayer wheel</p> <p>Beads</p> <p>Pictures of Buddha</p> <p>Pictures of a range of Vihara</p>
Christianity – Weblinks and publications	Artefacts
<p>www.request.org.uk: resources on many topics and big questions for EYFS through to KS4</p> <p>http://bibleforchildren.org/languages/english/stories.php - an online resource with PPTs telling Bible stories</p> <p>www.biblegateway.com – searchable online Bible with several translations and paraphrases</p> <p>www.understandingchristianity.org.uk</p> <p>Understanding Christianity – a theologically based teaching resource available on with training</p> <p>RE Today Resources: Picturing Christianity</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Picturing Easter</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Picturing Creation</p> <p>The Miracle Maker DVD – animation of the life of Jesus</p> <p>The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe by CS Lewis – book and DVD</p> <p>My Communion Book by Diane Murrie – a child’s guide to Holy Communion</p> <p>http://learn.christianaid.org.uk</p> <p>www.tearfund.org.uk Two Christians charities that provide resources about the work of Christians</p> <p>http://www.barnabasinschools.org.uk/</p> <p>Barnabas offers publications and training days.</p> <p>www.booksatpress.co.uk For EYFS the Puddles the Cat series of books and resources explore Christians’ practice and belief</p> <p>http://schoolsongs.org.uk/web/ - a range of songs mostly on a Christmas theme, which are free to download with words, music and videos</p>	<p>Variety of crosses</p> <p>Chalice, paten</p> <p>Icons</p> <p>Selection of Christmas cards</p> <p>Advent wreath</p> <p>Notice sheets from churches or photos of church notice boards</p> <p>Photos of famous Christians and Christian leaders (Archbishops of York and Canterbury for example)</p> <p>Bibles: Good News or Easy Read version are good for schools</p>
Hinduism – Weblinks and publications	Artefacts
<p>http://www.hinduacademy.org/schools/ks1-3.htm</p> <p>http://www.hinduacademy.org/resources/index.php - the book recommended here is a great resource for teachers</p> <p>http://www.connectar.co.uk/ - a company that can provide Hindu sessions (payment required)</p> <p>http://iskconeducationalservices.org/HoH/index.htm - useful website for background for teachers</p> <p>http://www.vcscsd.org/content/balabhavan/18-Puranas.pdf - a comprehensive version of this sacred text in English</p> <p>Hinduism – A very short Introduction by Kim Knott (OUP)</p>	<p>Puja tray with conch, bell, incense holder and incense sticks, aum symbol, fruit and flowers</p> <p>Murtis – Shiva, Vishnu, Lakshmi and Ganesh, also Rama, Sita, Hanuman and Krishna</p> <p>Mala beads</p>

Humanism – Weblinks and publications	Artefacts
<p>Humanists UK, (formerly The British Humanist Association (BHA)) General website www.humanism.org.uk This is well-designed and easy to explore, with links to Education, Ceremonies, News etc. on the home page. www.humanismforschools.org.uk to access free teaching materials including 6 “Teaching Toolkits” for ages 5-14 (worksheets for PowerPoint presentation, video clips, curriculum notes and teaching information.) “Rosie” a series of 3 by Susan Varley, designed for primary children learning about joy and grief. “Badger’s Parting Gift”, for young children coping with bereavement. “Michael Rosen’s Sad Book”, about the early death of his son, for primary children. “What is Humanism?” by Michael Rosen and Annemarie Young, for middle-years or early secondary. “The Atheist Tapes” 6 interviews by Jonathan Miller from “A Brief History of Disbelief.” “That’s Humanism” video by Stephen Fry. “Humanist Perspectives” 2 books of copiable resources for Primary and Secondary levels. 5 books by The Humanist Philosopher’s Group, for adults. An online course for teachers on Humanism, introduced by Sandy Toksvig. The BHA Education Officer is available at education@humanism.org.uk “Humanist Resources for Dorset Schools” by Chris Street, the Humanist co-opted to the Dorset SACRE. webmaster@dorsethumanists.co.uk</p>	
Islam – Weblinks and publications	Artefacts
<p>http://www.clearquran.com/index.html - an English version of the Qur’an http://99namesofallah.name/ - with meanings; http://www.exploreislamcambridge.com/aboutislam/english-translation-99-names-allah - there are useful links on this site Islam – A very short Introduction by Malise Ruthven (OUP) https://www.islamreligion.com/articles/2748/what-is-mosque/ - article about the use of the Mosque; https://www.trueTube.co.uk/film/holy-cribs-mosque - tour of a Mosque in London http://mirajaudio.com/. These stories are for younger children https://chickpeapress.co.uk/ on the 99 names of God in Islam https://ghazalichildren.org/ Lesson ideas and video clips based on one of the most popular Muslim philosopher Al-Ghazali https://fonsvitae.com/product-category/ghazali-project/fons-vitae-for-children/ Children’s books about Islamic teachings https://www.shahjahanmosque.org.uk/ The first mosque built in Britain. They have an excellent service for school visits and</p>	<p>Qur’an, with cover and stand Pictures of the Ka’ba Subha beads 99 names of Allah – picture or plaque Prayer Mat with compass Pictures of mosques/ visit to a mosque</p>

<p>beautiful gardens. https://www.bbc.co.uk/education/topics/zj3d7ty/resources/1 BBC video clips for KS1 https://www.bbc.co.uk/education/topics/zpdtbkb/resources/1 BBC video clips for KS2 http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b05p6sp2/clips My Life, My Religion clips on BBC2 https://www.discoverislam.com/original-edition Excellent posters: http://www.muslimheritage.com/ many fantastic resources here https://www.britishmuseum.org/PDF/Visit_Islamic_Civs_KS3.pdf A useful activity book that can be adapted to create interesting activities New Albukhary Foundation Gallery of the Islamic World is going to open in October 2018. http://artofislamicpattern.com/about/#/0 An amazing team of talented Muslim artists and they will work with schools and do the most amazing things. I am pretty sure Adam Williamson carved the gravestone for the Queen mother. http://www.khayaal.co.uk/about Muslim Theatre company always busy and very popular with schools http://www.jumanamoon.com/ Superb storyteller of Muslim and Jewish stories who will capture the children’s attention immediately. My first Qur’an - by Saniyasnain Khan (Goodword Books) The Best Loved Prayers from the Quran by Saniyasnain Khan (Goodword books) www.booksatpress.co.uk – small selection of resources for teaching Islam for EYFS</p>	
<p>Judaism – Weblinks and Publications</p> <p>http://www.reonline.org.uk/specials/jwol/ - children showing what it means to be Jewish with activities for the classroom. REOnline has many other resources about Judaism. http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/religion/judaism/, an old site, but the BBC has lots about Judaism. http://www.thebricktestament.com/, The whole Bible in Lego!! This is a great way to introduce children to Torah stories. www.chabad.org Descriptions of Jewish ceremonial objects, Jewish festivals etc. Chabad is a very orthodox organisation. https://www.reformjudaism.org.uk/resources/, This is the Movement for Reform Judaism website www.jewfaq.org, “Judaism 101” www.myjewishlearning.com – an orthodox general resource about Judaism http://www.jewishmuseum.org.uk/, The Jewish Museum in London conducts educational visits for schools and has many good resources. Chief Rabbi’s Children’s Siddur (prayer book), Sam the Detective and the Alef Bet Mystery, by Amye Rosenberg, available on Amazon.</p>	<p>Artefacts</p> <p>Mezuzah, Tallit, Tefillin, small Torah scroll, Menorah (7 branched candlestick); Hanukiah (8 branched candlestick with slave candle), yad, seder plate Kippah Havdalah candle Matzot</p>

<p>Benjy’s Bible Trails, by Chaya Burstein My Jewish Holidays Colouring Book, by ORNA, available on Amazon Hershel and the Hanukah Goblins, by Eric Kimmel, available on Amazon, .and there is a reading of it on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WtppM6mPsfM The Torah, by Douglas Charing, published by Heinemann Sam the Detective and the Alef Bet Mystery, by Amye Rosenberg, Benjy’s Bible Trails, by Chaya Burstein, The Matzah Ball Fairy, by Carla Heymsfeld, Passover Magic, by Roni Schotter, Children of the World Paint Jerusalem Inspirational Designs with the Hebrew Alphabet (Adult Colouring Book), The Hebrew Aleph-Bet Colouring Book, by Rachel Mintz, Judaica Jewish Colouring Book for Grown Ups, by Aliyah Schick, The Animated Haggadah, Holocaust education resources UCL Centre for Holocaust Education : https://www.holocausteducation.org.uk/teacher-resources/ Holocaust Teacher Resource Centre: http://www.holocaust-trc.org/ Jewish Museum, London: https://www.jewishmuseum.org.uk/ Yad Vashem – The World Holocaust Remembrance Centre: https://www.jewishmuseum.org.uk/ Beit Lohamei Haghetat – The Ghetto Fighter’s Museum : http://www.gfh.org.il/Eng/ The Kinder transport Association - http://www.kindertransport.org/resources.aspx?cat=9 Barnet Council SACRE has a Holocaust teaching pack Auschwitz : http://auschwitz.org/en/ Film : <i>Paperclips</i> : http://www.oneclipatatime.org/ Books:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit, Judith Kerr</i> ○ <i>The Boy in the Striped Pajamas, John Byne</i> ○ <i>Hanna’s Suitcase, Karen Levine</i> ○ <i>Number the Stars, Lois Lowry</i> ○ <i>The Book Thief, Markus Zusak</i> ○ <i>Diary of a Young Girl, Anne Frank</i> <p>Prince of Egypt DVD Local synagogue where possible Judaism – a Very Short Introduction by Norman Solomon (OUP) A copy of the Shema – from Deuteronomy 6:4-9</p>	
<p>Quakers – weblinks and publications</p>	
<p>https://www.quaker.org.uk/about-quakers https://www.quaker.org.uk/our-work the above contain descriptions of Quakerism and Quaker activities</p>	

<p>http://qfp.quaker.org.uk/ - this is the Quaker Book of Discipline</p> <p>https://www.quaker.org.uk/our-work/social-action-training-and-tools Quaker training tools for social action</p> <p>https://www.quaker.org.uk/children-and-young-people/teachers - a range of resources for teachers</p> <p>https://www.quaker.org.uk/resources/free-resources/teaching-resources-2 - a range of resources for peace education</p>	
<p>Sikhism – Weblinks and Publications</p>	<p>Artefacts</p>
<p>www.sikhiwiki.org – like Wikipedia, but specifically on Sikh matters</p> <p>www.sikh.co.uk</p> <p>www.sikhandsociety.org</p> <p>www.sewaday.org</p> <p>https://tinyurl.com/2rpe4w - online searchable Sikh scriptures</p> <p>The Mool Mantra – there are many sung versions on you tube for example, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WKnOqJaUc5Y (listen to a few and find a couple of different ones; compare the different versions)</p> <p>Pictures of the Gurus (again many available)</p>	<p>The 5 Ks – Kirpan, Kara, Kangha, Ka’achera and something to represent the Kesh (the uncut hair)</p> <p>The Khanda symbol and the Ik Onkar sign.</p>



Phase specific support – Primary Education

EYFS

The guidance given here is to help the teacher find ways of helping children to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally within the seven areas of learning and make provision for children to learn about beliefs and cultures.

RE is statutory for all children in reception class who are registered on the school roll. This statutory requirement for RE does not apply to nursery classes in maintained schools and is not, therefore, a legal requirement for much of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). However, many will agree it can form a valuable part of the educational experience of children throughout the key stage. Children come from a variety of cultural, religious and secular backgrounds. Some will come from overtly religious homes, some will have occasional experience of religion, others none at all. All children need to be valued whatever their backgrounds or belief systems. It is important that teachers take this variety of experience into account when planning.

RE must be taught in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus or, in voluntary aided church or faith schools, in line with a syllabus approved by the governing body, which will be in accordance with any requirements set out in the school's trust deed. Children will be developing knowledge and understanding, and appropriate vocabulary about, where they belong within their family and the wider community, different religions and the different ways of expressing and celebrating faiths.

They will also be developing the following attitudes and skills:

- A sense of curiosity
- Interest and enjoyment in discovery
- Empathy and open-mindedness
- Commenting and asking questions
- Expressing feelings and preferences.

These reflect the Characteristics of Learning in the 2018 EYFS Framework that require children to be engaged in finding out and exploring, playing with what they know, being involved and concentrating, making links and having their own ideas. Children should begin to explore the world of religion in terms of religious figures, books, times, places and objects and by visiting places of worship. They should listen to and talk about stories.

They may be introduced to religious words and use their senses in exploring religions and beliefs, practices and forms of expression. They reflect on their own feelings and experiences. They use their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation and wonder of the world in which they live. Every teacher of young children knows that knowledge is not fragmented in the early years, and all learning is holistic. Children learn in their own way through play, first hand experiences and people to make sense of the world.

A teacher should always be guided by the needs of each individual child, and effective and careful planning ensures that these needs are met.

The EYFS curriculum comprises seven interrelated areas of learning:

- communication and language (CL)
- physical development (PD)

- personal, social and emotional development (PSED)
- literacy (L)
- mathematics (M)
- understanding the world (UTW)
- expressive arts and design (EAD)

RE can make an active contribution to all these areas, but has a particularly important contribution to make to CL, PSED, UTW and EAD. Examples of RE-related experiences and opportunities are provided.

Communication and language (CL)

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

Personal, social and emotional development (PSED)

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

Understanding the World (UTW)

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

Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)

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

Example areas of study are included in the Locally Agreed Syllabus on pages 33-34.

Key Stage 1

The focus in Key Stage 1 should be on Christianity and Judaism, but referring to other faiths where appropriate, particularly if there are members of other faiths in the class and/or local community.

Key questions can be explored through religion-specific study and/or thematic approaches across two or more religions and belief systems.

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

Key aspects of RE

Over the three strands of 'believing, behaving and belonging' pupils in Years 1 and 2 should be taught to:

- Explore a range of religious and moral stories and sacred writings and talk about their meaning
- Name and explore a range of celebrations, worship and rituals in religion or beliefs, recognising the difference they make to individuals, families and the local community
- Identify and suggest meanings for religious symbols, using a range of religious and moral words and exploring how they express meaning
- Recognise the importance for some people of belonging to a religion or holding special beliefs, in diverse ways, exploring the difference this makes to their lives
- Communicate their ideas about what matters most, and what puzzles them most, in relation to spiritual feelings and concepts
- Reflect on how spiritual qualities and moral values relate to their own behaviour
- Recognise that religious teachings and ideas make a difference to individuals, families and the local community.

Experiences and opportunities

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

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

Questions

Questions form the heart of this syllabus to highlight for all its readers that RE is an exploration and enquiry which can give rise to diverse answers and beliefs. There are seven key questions to explore in Key Stage 1. They have been grouped into three main areas of focus: 'believing, belonging, behaving' and are interpreted in the light of each faith tradition to be studied. These questions are

found in Appendix B on pages 35 -37 of the Agreed Syllabus

It is important to remember that all seven key questions must be addressed in the exploration of Christianity. In the study of Judaism, teachers must ensure that all three areas of focus (believing, belonging and behaving) are addressed. If other optional traditions are included, enquiry need not reflect this balance.

As demonstrated in the extended guidance on planning (pages 12-15 in this document) the questions provided for this key stage should be used creatively, combining two or more of the strands with the key concepts and specific content

For a thematic approach, questions from sections on different religions can be combined to help pupils develop an understanding of the similarities and differences between religions.

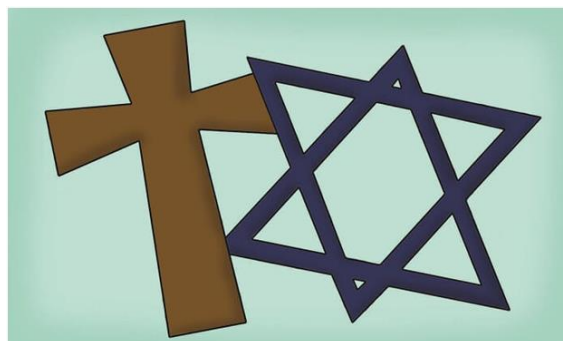
Here are some examples

- “How and why are celebrations, including religious celebrations, important to people?” could be combined with “Who am I?” to create a unit on the Jewish Shabbat. An appropriate question might be, “How does celebrating Shabbat help to give Jewish people their identity?”
- “How and why do symbols express meaning including religious meaning?” could be combined with “What do people believe about God, people and the natural world?” to create a unit on the synagogue. An appropriate question might be, “What do the symbols in the synagogue show about Jewish beliefs about God?”
- “How and why are celebrations, including religious celebrations, important to people?” could be combined with “What do people believe about God, people and the natural world?” to create a unit on harvest, from a Jewish and Christian point of view. An appropriate question might be, “How and why do Jews and Christians give thanks to God for their food?”

Suggestions for appropriate questions are made in relation to each area of focus on page 35-7 of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The questions a teacher poses, or encourages pupils to pose, will depend upon the key concepts chosen to shape each unit of study.

Time recommendation

The agreed syllabus is based on the expectation that pupils in Key Stage 1 will receive 36 hours per year of RE.



Key Stage 2

Throughout this key stage (Years 3-6), pupils learn about Christianity and at least Hinduism and Islam, recognising their impact locally, nationally and globally. They make connections between differing aspects of religion and consider the different forms of religious expression. Being taught accurately, 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 RE.

Key aspects of RE

Over the three strands of 'believing, behaving and belonging' pupils in Years 3 and 4 should be taught to:

- Explore and discuss some religious and moral stories, sacred writings and sources, placing them in the context of the belief system
- Investigate and suggest meanings for celebration, worship and rituals, thinking about similarities and differences
- Describe and interpret how symbols and actions are used to express beliefs
- Recognise that people can have different identities, beliefs and practices, and different ways of belonging, expressing their interpretations, ideas and feelings
- Reflect on questions of meaning and purpose in life, expressing questions and opinions
- Investigate questions of right and wrong in life, expressing questions and opinions.

Over the three strands of 'believing, behaving and belonging' pupils in Years 5 and 6 should be taught to:

- Describe and discuss some key aspects of the nature of religion and belief
- Investigate the significance and impact of religion and belief in some local, national and global communities
- Consider the meaning of a range of forms of religious expression, identifying why they are important in religious practice and noting links between them
- Reflect on the challenges of belonging and commitment both in their own lives and within traditions, recognising how commitment to a religion or personal belief is shown in a variety of ways
- Describe and begin to develop arguments about religious and other responses to ultimate and ethical questions
- Reflect on ideas of right and wrong and apply their own and others' responses to them.

Experiences and opportunities

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

- Encountering religion through visitors and visits to places of worship, 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 a range of human experiences and feelings
- Reflecting on their own and others' insights into life and its origin, 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, particularly in enhancing pupils' awareness of religions and beliefs globally.

Questions

Questions form the heart of this syllabus to highlight for all its readers that RE is an exploration and enquiry which can give rise to diverse answers and beliefs. There are ten key questions to explore in Key Stage 2. They have been grouped into three main areas of focus: 'believing, belonging and behaving', and are interpreted in the light of each faith tradition to be studied.

It is important to remember that all ten key questions must be addressed in the exploration of Christianity. In the study of Hinduism and Islam, teachers must ensure that all three areas of focus (believing, belonging and behaving) are addressed. If other optional traditions are included, enquiry need not reflect this balance.

As demonstrated in the section on extended planning guidance, the questions provided for this key stage should be used creatively. They need to be broken down to be more tightly focused and some suggestions are provided on p 38 – 41 of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

Alternatively, questions from sections on different religions can be combined to help pupils develop an understanding of the similarities and differences between religions.

Here are some examples:

- "Where and how do people worship?" could be combined with "How do people's beliefs about God, the world and others impact on their lives?" to produce a unit on Hindu puja and shrines at home. An appropriate question might be, "What does daily puja reveal about Hindu beliefs in God?"
- "How do sacred texts and other sources help people to understand God, the world and human life?" could be combined with "What influences the ways people behave and what is expected of a person in following a religion or belief" to create a unit on the Qur'an. An appropriate question might be, "How do Muslims show that the Qur'an is important to them in their daily lives?"
- "How do religious families and communities practise their faith and what contribution do they make to local life?" could be combined with "How do sacred texts and other sources help people to understand God, the world and human life?" to create a unit about charity. An appropriate question might be, "What inspires Christians and Muslims to provide foodbanks for the poor?"

Time recommendation

The agreed syllabus is based on the expectation that pupils in Key Stage 2 will receive 45 hours per year of RE.



Phase specific support – secondary education

Key Stage 3

Throughout this key stage students extend their understanding of Christianity and at least Buddhism and Sikhism in local, national and global contexts. They also explore issues of interfaith dialogue. Optional other religions can be added to the Key Stage 3 RE course and those selected may be included for a number of reasons. For example, because: there are students or staff of these faiths in school; there is a particular interest in these faiths on the part of students; there are people of these faiths in the local community. Key questions can be explored through religion specific study or/and thematic approaches across two or more religions and belief systems.

At this level students should be enabled to 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 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 interfaith 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.

Key aspects of RE

Over the three strands of 'believing, behaving and belonging' students should be taught to:

- Investigate and explain the differing impacts 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 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
- 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.

Experiences and opportunities:

All students should have the chance to experience a wide range of opportunities, including as many of the following as possible:

- Encountering people from different religious, cultural and philosophical groups, who can express a range of convictions on religious and ethical issues
- Visiting places of major religious significance
- Using opportunities in ICT to enhance students 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 RE, 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 RE and other subject areas such as the arts, humanities, literature and science.

The Interfaith Dialogue focused questions must be addressed and appear separately within the 'believing, behaving and belonging' elements of the Key Stage 3 Appendix D (p46 of the Agreed Syllabus).

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

- Christianity
- Buddhism and Sikhism
- Other religions, as appropriate
- A secular world view, where appropriate.

Questions

Questions form the heart of this syllabus to highlight for all its readers that RE is an exploration and enquiry which can give rise to diverse answers and beliefs. There are eight key questions to explore in Key Stage 3. They have been grouped into three main areas of focus: 'believing, belonging and behaving' and should be interpreted in the light of each faith tradition to be studied.

It is important to remember that all eight key questions must be addressed in the exploration of Christianity. In the study of Buddhism and Sikhism teachers must ensure that all three areas of focus (believing, belonging and behaving) are addressed. If other optional traditions are included, enquiry need not reflect this balance.

The questions provided for this key stage should be used creatively. They need to be broken down into ones that are more tightly focused, and some suggestions are provided on pages 42-26 of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

Here is an example from Christianity:

- 'What do Christians understand to be the purpose of human life?' From the believing strand might come a series of questions which includes ones such as, 'Why do some Christians believe that God wants them to live a life of service to others?' or 'What are the main ideas/beliefs that influence your responses to other people?'
- In addition, questions from this first area of focus can be linked with others from a different area. This might mean that alongside the question suggested above related to believing, students might engage with others emerging from behaving such as: 'How does Christian Aid put the teachings of Christianity into practice?' or 'Why do so many people think it is

important to help others?’ This example shows how questions can be drawn from different areas of focus and reworded to create a mini unit of study.

- Alternatively, questions from sections on different religions can be combined to help pupils develop an understanding of the similarities and differences between religions.

In planning RE courses, it is essential that sufficient emphasis is given to reflection and evaluative aspects of the subject. Suggestions for appropriate questions are made in relation to each area of focus on page 42 of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The questions a teacher poses, or encourages students to pose, will depend upon the key concepts chosen to shape each unit of study (See planning guidance on pages 13-17). Although the content of the RE exploration has also been outlined, the purpose of this is to support teachers and learners address the key questions.

Time recommendation

The agreed syllabus has been based on the expectation that students in Key Stage 3 will receive 45 hours per year of RE.

Key Stage 4

RE continues to be a statutory requirement for all pupils at Key Stage 4 unless withdrawn by their parents, even for pupils who have not opted to take GCSE religious studies (RS).

Schools where many students do not choose to take GCSE RS need to provide a coherent syllabus that builds on what they have covered at Key Stage 3. Some possible topics for those not taking GCSE might include:

- The main World faiths, including Christianity and a range of secular world views
- A wider range of beliefs and concepts, building on prior learning
- Questions about the relationship between religion and science; such as issues of truth, explanation, meaning and purpose
- Questions about expressions of spirituality; such as how and why human self-understanding and experiences are expressed in a variety of forms
- Issues surrounding ethics and relationships, particularly with regards to human identity
- Global issues such as religious and non-religious responses to questions of health, wealth, war, animal rights and the environment
- The nature and purpose of interfaith dialogue, particularly by encountering people from different religious, cultural and philosophical groups, who can express a range of convictions on religious and ethical issues and visiting, where possible, places of major religious significance
- The study of one of the synoptic Gospels in depth along with other Biblical writings
- 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, ICT) to communicate their ideas and responses creatively and thoughtfully.

Time recommendation

The agreed syllabus has been based on the expectation that all students in Key Stage 4 will receive 40 hours per year of RE.

Key Stage 5

Students should be encouraged to continue to develop the attitudes outlined in the introduction that continued study of religious and non-religious world views brings. Appendix E on page 47-48 of the Locally Agreed syllabus offers some suggested topics and questions that could be addressed.

Students in the 16-19 age range will have a wide range of abilities, experiences and interests. Courses will vary in nature and length. There is great potential for RE to enhance and broaden the post-16 curriculum and to support and complement other subjects. It should provide opportunities for the continuing spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students.

Schools could consider a variety of ways in which students' entitlement to RE might be organised. Conferences and special events, as well as regular sessions with clear links to other curriculum areas, such as history or English literature, would provide students with opportunities to engage with relevant religious questions. Schools may choose to timetable RE as a discrete subject on a weekly/fortnightly basis. Some schools will provide RE as part of a general studies course. This might be through a modular arrangement with RE contributing units of study alongside modules from other subjects. An externally accredited general studies course, which includes modules identifiable as RE, will be deemed to fulfil the statutory requirements of this syllabus.

Schools should ensure that:

- A minimum of six hours per year is provided for all students
- The RE provided gives all students an opportunity to build on and beyond what they have already achieved
- Ideally students should be able to gain some form of accreditation for their post-16 religious studies, and in the absence of alternative courses, students might be able to follow a Key Stage 4 short course GCSE in Y10/11 and take a full course qualification post-16
- A level RE courses should be offered where possible, but to fulfil the requirements of this syllabus, students may follow a course leading to some form of accreditation without necessarily being entered for any associated examination.

When deciding what aspects of the syllabus to incorporate in what the school offers to students, it will be necessary to take account of the interests and areas of expertise of staff involved. It might also be appropriate and desirable to consult students about their interests as well.

Time recommendation

The agreed syllabus has been based on the expectation that pupils in Key Stage 5 will receive a minimum of six hours per year of RE.



Attainment, progression and assessment

It is important that all pupils make progress in RE. While there is still much discussion about the national expectations for standards in RE, the Milton Keynes syllabus provides an assessment framework for RE based on age-related expectations (pages 30-31 or the Locally Agreed Syllabus) and some guidance on the principles of assessment in RE.

Progress in RE can be best measured where units of work begin with activities that help the teacher to discover what pupils already know and can do in relation to the knowledge, concepts and skills that they will encounter in the unit. The best “engage” activities (see the planning guidance on pages 10 - 13) will both provide a link for the pupils from their own experience and allow the teacher to assess their current understanding. The learning will then be planned to ensure that the teaching, research and activities will take their learning towards the next steps, in line with the expectations set out in the syllabus.

The age-related expectations in the revised syllabus relate to the three strands (believing, behaving and belonging), but also include progression in the skills that relate in RE. The expectations cover Years 1 – 8. The expectation of the syllabus is that by Year 9 GCSE expectations will form the basis of assessment, even when pupils begin GCSE in Year 10. EYFS attainment and progress should be measured against the current Early Learning Goals.

The statements in the document relate to what is expected of the majority of pupils in a year group. Those who need more support to achieve the objectives, as well as those who do not achieve them could be deemed as “developing” or “working below”; those who bring in information and skills from other subject areas or a wider range of faiths should be deemed as “excelling” or “working above”. Schools are free to choose their own language to describe the standards achieved by their pupils and this should be in line with the language used for other subject areas.

The method of recording or tracking should be in line with a school’s policy. Marking and assessment policies should be observed in RE as well as other subjects.

It is important to note that assessment in RE needs to take account of the wide range of ways in which pupils record their learning. Large class scrap books, audio or video files, teacher notes and pupil interviews can all contribute to an understanding of the standard that pupils have reached and should be taken into account when recording the progress of individuals and cohorts.

Note also that where cross curricular activities are undertaken these can only count towards achievement in RE if specific RE learning objectives are met. It is good practice to use a piece of work to assess in more than one subject, but a great piece of writing might not be such good RE and the best RE may not be the most eloquent piece of prose.

Visits and visitors

Visits to places of worship enhance RE provision and promote cultural cohesion and mutual understanding. Milton Keynes has a wide range of places welcoming school visits and many of the faith groups have members who are willing to go into schools to contribute to RE lessons. The MK Faith Centres Booklet is available here:

<https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/assets/attach/41684/MK%20Faith%20Centres%20Booklet%20FINAL%20VERSION.pdf>

Such visits and visitors have most impact when they are carefully planned and it is essential that the visitor and the venue are well informed about the learning objectives, the current knowledge level of the pupils and anticipated outcomes.

A useful guidance document from NATRE sets out some of the key issues that teachers need to take note of and can be found by following this link:

<https://www.natre.org.uk/uploads/Free%20Resources/Voices%20of%20faith%20and%20belief%20in%20schools.pdf>

The pictures below are from the MK Faith Centres Booklet and show just a small range of the venues available in the area.



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