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Children first

Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2026

Understanding religion and worldviews across an ever-changing landscape



Inside front cover

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Foreword

We are pleased to present to you the new Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2026 that has been adopted by West Sussex County Council as the Local Education Authority. It is the outcome of a five-yearly statutory review process.



As Chairman of the West Sussex Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE), I would like to give particular thanks to Karen Hammond, our external Religious Education Consultant, and to Rosemary Black, who both spent a huge amount of time putting the document together and making the changes required to bring it up to date. I would also like to thank Helen Elphick, Karen Gale, Rev Chrissie Millwood, Marion Richardson, and Andrew Simpson, who have been prepared to give their time and to share their expertise and good practice in the production of the West Sussex Agreed Syllabus 2026. We also thank the teachers who have also contributed their knowledge and practice in teaching religious education.

The world in which our children and young people are growing up will offer them a myriad of opportunities as well as presenting them with many challenges. We strongly believe that the teaching of religious education in our schools is of vital importance to promoting tolerance and social cohesion.

This agreed syllabus enables teachers, faith communities and others engaged in the education of our young people to identify and access these values and to gain insights into the human condition and what it is like to live in contemporary society.

We believe that this agreed syllabus will help teachers as they deliver good quality religious education in our schools, and in the enhancement of the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of pupils. This revision of the agreed syllabus also introduces children to the themes of study of Humanist and other worldview values and beliefs.

Our agreed syllabus is designed to be a starting point rather than a scheme of work, allowing schools to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of the local community in which they live.

The review of religious education in England by the Religious Education Council of England and Wales points out that religious education teaching should provide pupils with the knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews, enabling them to develop their ideas, values and identities. It should develop in pupils an aptitude for dialogue so that they can participate positively in our society with its diverse religions and worldviews. We believe that this new, revised agreed syllabus fulfils this requirement.

Richard Burrett
Chairman, West Sussex SACRE

1 The importance of Religious Education

1.1 Background and context

The West Sussex Education Authority's Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (RE) of 2021 was subject to review in 2026, as is required by law. The 2026 Locally Agreed Syllabus reflects the changing religious landscape of the UK and diversity of society in Great Britain today. Since the Education Reform Act of 1988, the local, national, and global religious landscape has changed significantly.

The Census question asking with which religion did people identify was voluntary.



Religion and belief in West Sussex

Religion and belief	Census data 2011	Census data 2021
Christian	61.76%	48.9%
Buddhist	0.38%	0.43%
Hindu	0.91%	1.15%
Jewish	0.18%	0.19%
Muslim	1.57%	2.18%
Sikh	0.14%	0.16%
Other religion	0.51%	0.58%
No religion	26.9%	41.1%
Not answered	7.67%	6.09%

This is the most recent data available, based on the 2021 census.

In the 2021 Census, 93.9% of West Sussex residents responded to this question.

Just under half of the West Sussex population identified as Christian in the 2021 Census, at 48.1%. No religion was the second most common response, at 41.1% of the population. A further 4.7% of the population followed another religion.

Since the 2011 Census, the proportion of the West Sussex population identifying as Christian has decreased significantly (from 61.8% to 48.1%), whilst the proportion identifying with no religion has increased by a similar magnitude (from 26.9% to 41.1%)

The proportion of all other religious identities reported in the 2021 Census has remained similar or increased slightly compared to the 2011 Census.

The Locally Agreed Syllabus is still required by law to reflect the fact "that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking into account the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain" (1996 Act).

Changes in society underline the need for RE to move beyond the teaching of an assumed set of beliefs and practices which are universal, static and unchanging and for pupils to appreciate the different ways in which religion and worldviews can be understood, interpreted and studied. This syllabus is designed to support school leaders by clearly stating the intent, appropriate implementation, and potential impact of RE on the lives of children and young people so that they can flourish in a changing world.



1.2 **Why religion and worldviews?**

The nature of RE has evolved over the past thirty years. Academic approaches to the subject have changed significantly over the last decade. The West Sussex syllabus reflects the expectations for RE as set out in the National Content Standard for RE (2023), Religion and Worldviews Project (2024) and the Ofsted 'Deep and Meaningful? The Religious Education subject report' (2024).

The syllabus has been updated to incorporate:

- a religion and worldviews framework and pedagogy
- the expectation that pupils will explore religion and worldviews as they are expressed by individuals, communities and societies both locally, nationally and globally
- the context of West Sussex, so that pupils engage with the "particular" as the starting point for RE enquiries before connecting to organised/institutional religions and worldviews
- non-religious worldviews such as Humanism
- an acknowledgment that many peoples' personal worldview aligns with organised/institutional worldviews in varying degrees
- the recognition that religions and worldviews are fluid and change over time.

All Schools should invest in high quality training and professional development, resources and allocate sufficient time for RE to ensure that they can fulfil the expectations of this syllabus.

1.3 **The value of Religious Education**

RE contributes dynamically to children and young people's education by provoking challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of ultimate reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. In RE, pupils learn about and from religions and worldviews in local, national, and global contexts to discover, explore and consider answers to these questions using different sources. It provides invaluable opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development and enhances pupils' awareness and understanding of different beliefs, teachings, practices, forms of expression and influences of religion on individuals, families, communities, and cultures.

RE encourages pupils to learn from religions, beliefs, values, and traditions while exploring their own beliefs and questions of meaning. It challenges pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret, and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith, and ethics and to communicate their responses clearly and thoughtfully. Some pupils come from religious backgrounds, but it is recognised that many others have no attachment to religious beliefs and practices. To ensure that all pupils' voices are heard and the RE curriculum is broad and balanced, RE should include religions and worldviews which go beyond the 'big six' so that pupils can consider religions such as the Bahá'í Faith, Jainism and Zoroastrianism as well as secular worldviews such as Humanism.

RE encourages pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging, enabling them to flourish individually within their communities and as citizens in a pluralistic society. RE therefore has an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment, and lifelong learning. It enables them to develop respect for and sensitivity to others, in particular those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own, promoting discernment and combating prejudice.

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
- sustainable development of the earth and care for creation.

The RE curriculum schools put in place should therefore include opportunities for pupils to think about the significance of interfaith dialogue; the important contribution religion can make to community cohesion and the reduction of religious prejudice and discrimination. It is essential that RE lessons provide pupils with a safe space in which to share their own beliefs, viewpoints and ideas without embarrassment, prejudice, or ridicule. Pupils should have the opportunity to think deeply about how religion relates to them, recognising both similarities and differences within and between religions and worldviews and should be able to hold balanced and well-informed conversations about religion and belief.

Teaching should equip pupils with systematic knowledge and understanding of a range of religious and non-religious worldviews, enabling them to develop their ideas, values, and identities. It should develop an aptitude for dialogue so that pupils can participate positively in our society with its diverse religions and worldviews. Pupils should gain and deploy the skills needed to understand, interpret, and evaluate texts, sources of wisdom and authority and other evidence. They should learn to articulate clearly and coherently their personal

beliefs, ideas, values, and experiences while respecting the right of others to differ.

1.4 **Religious Education in the curriculum**

RE has a distinctive character that needs to be recognised and safeguarded. It makes its own contribution to the school curriculum in terms of knowledge, concepts, skills, and attitudes, as well as sharing common ground with other subjects in contributing to the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, and mental development of pupils and preparing them for adult life. The subject is concerned to promote, through an encounter with Christianity and other religious and non-religious worldviews, a pupil's search for values, meaning and purpose. Any form of integration of the subject with other areas of the curriculum must ensure that the distinctive subject matter of Christianity and other religious and non-religious worldviews is adequately covered. Care must be taken to ensure that pupils develop the ability to perceive and appreciate the use of simile, metaphor and other forms of both verbal and non-verbal expression used in religious communication.

1.5 **Statutory requirements for the provision of Religious Education**

The statutory requirements for RE were set out between 1944 and 1993 and consolidated by the Education Act (1996) and the School Standards and Framework Act (1998). Circular 1/94 and the subsequent revision of guidance in 2010 (RE in English Schools: Non -Statutory Guidance 2010) offered an interpretation of the legislation. RE is part of the "basic" school curriculum and is distinct from collective worship. RE is a statutory subject of the school curriculum of all maintained schools. Academies and free schools are contractually required through the terms



of their funding to make provision for the teaching of RE to all pupils on the school roll.

Under the law all pupils are entitled to be taught RE in every year up to and including Year 11. Post 16 students, including those in further education, should have the opportunity to study religion and worldviews during the post 16 course of study. The provision of RE is required for all in the sixth form. Although the organisation may change from pre-16 there should be continuing provision for RE in Years 12 and 13 to meet the needs of the students and the requirements of this syllabus.

RE is not compulsory for:

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

The RE curriculum is determined by the local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE), which is responsible for producing the Locally Agreed Syllabus for RE. The agreed syllabus produced by a SACRE 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.' Schools with a religious designation may prioritise one religion in their RE curriculum, but all schools must recognise diverse religions and systems of belief in the UK both locally and nationally.

The legislation requires that:

- Local Authority maintained schools without a religious character must follow the Locally Agreed Syllabus
- Voluntary aided schools with a religious character should provide RE in accordance with the trust deed or religious designation of the school unless parents request the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

Foundation schools and voluntary controlled schools with a religious character should follow the Locally Agreed Syllabus unless parents request RE in accordance with the trust deed or religious designation of the school.

RE is compulsory in academies and free schools as set out in their funding agreement. Academies may use the Locally Agreed Syllabus, or a different Locally Agreed Syllabus with the permission of the SACRE concerned or devise their own curriculum.

The requirement for special schools is that they should follow the Locally Agreed Syllabus where practicable.

All schools are now required by Ofsted to publish their school's curriculum, which includes RE, on their school website. Please note that RE is statutory for all pupils in all schools (subject to parental withdrawal) and that secondary schools, including academies and free schools, should publish how they are meeting the requirement for statutory RE at KS4 if it is not delivered through the GCSE curriculum.

In summary, the law requires RE be provided for all registered pupils and legislation states that:

- RE must be nondenominational
- the 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 practice of other principal religions represented in Great Britain"
- RE is distinct from collective worship
- special schools should follow the agreed syllabus where practicable
- voluntary aided schools with a religious character should provide RE in accordance with the trust deed or religious designation of the school unless parents request the Locally Agreed Syllabus
- foundation schools and voluntary controlled schools with a religious character should follow the Locally Agreed Syllabus unless parents request RE in accordance with the trust deed or religious designation of the school
- RE and collective worship are compulsory in academies and free schools.

The right to withdraw – the law allows that a parent may request:

- that their child be either wholly or partly excused from receiving RE given in accordance with the agreed syllabus
- that a pupil who is wholly or partly excused from receiving RE provided by the school may receive RE of the kind desired by the parents elsewhere, provided that it will not interfere with the attendance of the pupil on any day except at the beginning or end of the school session.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from RE lessons or any part of the RE curriculum (pupils may withdraw themselves if they are aged 18 or over). The school has a duty to supervise pupils who are withdrawn but not to provide additional teaching. Any alternative arrangements for RE must be made by the parent. More guidance on withdrawal can be found online at **assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7adb3ce5274a34770e7953/DCSF-00114-2010.pdf**

1.6 RE and Ofsted

The Ofsted requirements for RE in England are set out in the Education Inspection Framework (EIF). The EIF sets out the standards that Ofsted expects schools to meet in all areas of the curriculum including RE.

The key requirements for RE in the EIF are:

- RE should be taught in a way that is engaging and challenging for pupils
- RE should help pupils to understand the different religions and beliefs that are found in the world
- RE should help pupils to develop their own spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) awareness
- RE should be taught in a way that is fair and impartial.

Ofsted inspectors will look at how well schools are meeting these requirements when they inspect RE. They will use a variety of evidence to do this:

- Pupils' knowledge and understanding of different religions and beliefs
- Pupils' ability to think critically about religion and beliefs
- Pupils' SMSC development
- The teaching and learning of RE.

1.7 Curriculum time for RE

Schools have a statutory responsibility to deliver RE to all pupils, except those withdrawn by parents. Schools should allocate sufficient time to deliver RE successfully and to a high standard, enabling all pupils to make progress in developing their knowledge, understanding and associated skills. It is important to provide the time for pupils to explore the content in depth. RE should be taught in clearly identifiable time. It is the responsibility of headteachers and governing bodies to ensure that adequate time allocations are made for the implementation of this agreed syllabus. Where headteachers

The expectation is that a minimum of 5% of curriculum time should be allocated to RE in school. This equates to the following:

Education phase	Curriculum time
Nursery	No statutory requirement
Reception	36 hours per year integrated into relevant strands of the EYFS
Key Stage One	36 hours per year
Key Stage Two	45 hours per year
Key Stage Three	45 hours per year
Key Stage Four	Short course GCSE or non-examined course: a minimum of 1 hour per week Full course GCSE equal time to other Humanities GCSE subjects
Key Stage Five	Minimum of 20 hours per year for core RE

and governors do not allocate sufficient time for RE pupils are unlikely to achieve the standards set out in his syllabus and demanded by Ofsted. RE is different from assembly/collective worship. Curriculum time for RE is distinct from the time spent on collective worship or school assembly.

1.8 **Resources**

Schools should meet the expectations of this syllabus by designing a curriculum which is delivered in an exciting and dynamic way, incorporating books, artefacts, ICT, and video materials. Provision should include the use of high-quality resources, educational visits and visitors representing a wide range of faiths and other traditions. Resourcing of RE should be equivalent to the level that is provided for foundation subjects.

1.9 **Aims of the syllabus**

The intention of this syllabus is to ensure that all pupils gain a basic understanding of the principal religions in Great Britain by the time they leave school. This does not preclude schemes of work from covering those specified religions in greater depth or from including content from other religious and non-religious worldviews if appropriate. This should not, however, result in pupils being confused by covering too many worldviews in insufficient depth.

The Locally Agreed Syllabus requires that:

- Christianity should be studied throughout each key stage
- the other principal religions represented in Great Britain (here regarded as Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism) should be studied across the key stages
- other religious and non-religious worldviews and traditions represented in Great Britain such as the Bahá'í, Humanism, Jainism and Zoroastrianism may also be studied.

The arrangement to teach religious worldviews other than Christianity over the primary and secondary phase is to enable the greatest flexibility possible while ensuring a broad coverage. To provide a coherent scheme of work, religious and non-religious worldviews other than Christianity should be planned over two key stages (KS1 and 2; KS3 and 4). Schools will need to liaise where necessary to ensure that this is planned effectively particularly where a school does not cover the whole of the key stages.

At KS4 all schemes developed in schools should comply with the principles set out in this syllabus. It is recommended that all pupils follow a syllabus leading towards an accredited course such as GCSE Religious Studies (short or full course). In order to comply with this syllabus, schools that choose not to follow a course leading to a GCSE qualification should follow a course that meets the GCSE criteria. For special schools, an appropriate scheme should be devised.

This syllabus recommends that primary and secondary schools should work alongside each other in development of their curriculum to aid progression and continuity between key stages.

1.10 **Learning across the curriculum**

Alongside the subject's contribution to pupils' mental, cognitive, and linguistic development, RE offers distinctive opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. RE lessons should offer a structured and safe space during curriculum time for reflection, discussion, dialogue, and debate. Lessons should also allow for timely and sensitive responses to be made to unforeseen events of a religious, moral, or philosophical nature, whether local, national, or global.

The contribution of Religious Education and British values should actively promote the values of :

- democracy
- the rule of law

- individual liberty
- mutual respect
- tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

RE lessons should be a safe place for pupils to learn, express ideas, opinions, promote debate and discussion. Excellent teaching of RE will enable pupils to learn to think for themselves about British values.

In RE pupils learn the skills and develop attitudes which support them to overcome intolerance leading to respect which allows them to celebrate diversity.

1.11 Promoting spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development through RE

RE 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 religion 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.

RE provides opportunities to promote **moral development** through:

- enhancing the values identified within the 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 and creation to promote racial and religious respect and personal integrity
- considering the importance of rights and responsibilities and developing a sense of conscience.

RE 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.

RE 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 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.

2 The syllabus requirements

2.1 Overview of the syllabus

All pupils should engage with Christianity throughout each key stage in line with legislation. The RE curriculum should ensure that pupils have the opportunity to learn about additional worldviews such as other Abrahamic traditions, Dharmic traditions and non-religious worldviews. The requirements set out in each of the key stage sections should be viewed as minimum expectations. Schools are free to make additions so long as the RE curriculum is structured and coherent and exhibits clear progression of learning.

As part of their RE entitlement pupils across all key stages, including KS5, should be given opportunities to explore a range of different aspects of the religious and non-religious worldviews they study. This should include learning about:

- **Belonging** – how people demonstrate, express and celebrate their worldview or religion at a personal, community, societal or global level
- **Wisdom** – the concepts, foundational beliefs, sources of authority and questions of truth that characterise organised religious and non-religious worldviews
- **Living well** – how religious and non-religious worldviews articulate what it means to live a good life and provide people with guidance for living
- **Authority and power** – how influential leaders, understanding of deities and key texts influence belief and shape practice
- **Grand narratives** – how world events, societies and history are shaped by religious and non-religious worldviews in both positive and problematic ways.

Pupils should also be taught about the 'ways of knowing' or disciplinary knowledge so they can engage meaningfully with the content and interrogate the RE subject matter with confidence. In this syllabus we refer to the recognised disciplines of theology, philosophy and the human/social sciences as the main academic disciplines associated with the study of RE.

As part of RE enquiries pupils should be given regular opportunities to reflect on their personal worldview and consider the extent to which their existing beliefs, ideas and values have been challenged or shaped by their RE learning (Personal Knowledge).

Teachers should also consider how the RE curriculum will enrich the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) of pupils.

2.2 Progression of learning

Pupils in the EYFS should explore a variety of religious and non-religious worldviews by identifying special people, books, times, places, and objects, and (where appropriate) by visiting places of worship. Pupils should listen to, discuss, and ask questions about stories from a variety of sources and religious worldviews. Pupils should be introduced to subject specific vocabulary and have the opportunity to engage all their senses to explore beliefs, practices, and forms of expression. Pupils should be encouraged to ask questions, reflect on their own feelings and experiences and use their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation for the world in which they live.



In KS1 learning should focus on foundational beliefs and forms of expression (such as celebrations, sources of wisdom and characteristics of daily living) of the religious and non-religious worldviews pupils encounter in their local community, across West Sussex and other parts of Great Britain. Pupils should also have the opportunity to learn about the different ways they can find out about religious and non-religious worldviews and develop the specific skills associated with these.

Over the course of KS2, RE enquiries should become increasingly sophisticated. They should enable pupils to deepen and extend their knowledge and understanding of the lived expression and foundational beliefs and ideas of religious and non-religious worldviews locally, nationally and globally. There should be more explicit teaching of disciplinary knowledge and the enquiries pupils undertake should enable them to recognise similarities and differences both within and across different religious and non-religious worldviews. Pupils should be given the opportunity to explore broader themes such as justice, peace, truth, meaning and purpose.

The RE curriculum at upper KS2 and across KS3 should require pupils to think deeply about challenging ideas and ethical questions. Regular opportunities should be provided for them to consider how religious and non-religious worldviews change over time so they can come to appreciate the complexities and diversity as practised and experienced by people. Pupils should also be given the opportunity to reflect on the concept of religion itself, consider questions of authority and power and deepen their critical thinking skills so they gain greater insight about the degree to which personal worldviews (including their own) align with institutional and organised worldviews and how these shape outlook and action.

At KS4, the RE curriculum should introduce students to a broad range of religious and non-religious worldviews, focusing on how beliefs shape practice and how different traditions respond to key moral and social issues. Students should explore major themes such as ethics, authority, identity and the nature of belief, revisiting ideas introduced earlier in the school to deepen understanding. Skills such as explanation, comparison, interpretation of sources and basic evaluation should be strengthened, helping students move from describing beliefs to analysing how and why they differ, and what this means for individuals and communities.

At KS5, the curriculum should build on the foundation of previous key stages through more advanced study of theological, philosophical and ethical perspectives, engaging with both religious and secular viewpoints at a higher conceptual level. The curriculum should return to familiar themes, such as the nature of God, morality, experience, and the role of religion in society, but exploring them with greater depth, complexity and critical challenge. Students should develop sophisticated skills including critical analysis, argument construction, evaluation of competing viewpoints, and engagement with scholarly debate, showing clear progression from KS4. This prepares learners for academic study, informed citizenship, and thoughtful engagement with contemporary belief and practice.

2.3 **Structure of the syllabus – building blocks**

The 2026 syllabus is not prescriptive: it does not specify the precise knowledge and skills which pupils should learn across each key stage. It does, however, provide a clear framework for curriculum design which is based on four key elements called 'Building Blocks'. These building blocks are substantive knowledge, disciplinary knowledge, personal knowledge and spirituality and assessment.



Syllabus building blocks

BUILDING BLOCK 1

Substantive knowledge

The RE curriculum should enable pupils to learn about the lived reality, foundational beliefs, concepts and ideas and the impact and significance of the religious and non-religious worldviews they encounter.

BUILDING BLOCK 2

Disciplinary knowledge

The RE curriculum should equip pupils with the specialist knowledge and skills associated with the disciplines of theology, social sciences and philosophy so that they can become proficient interpreters of the religious and non-religious worldviews they encounter.

BUILDING BLOCK 3

Personal knowledge and spirituality

The RE curriculum should provide pupils with regular opportunities for reflection and reflexivity, dialogue and spiritual flourishing.

BUILDING BLOCK 4

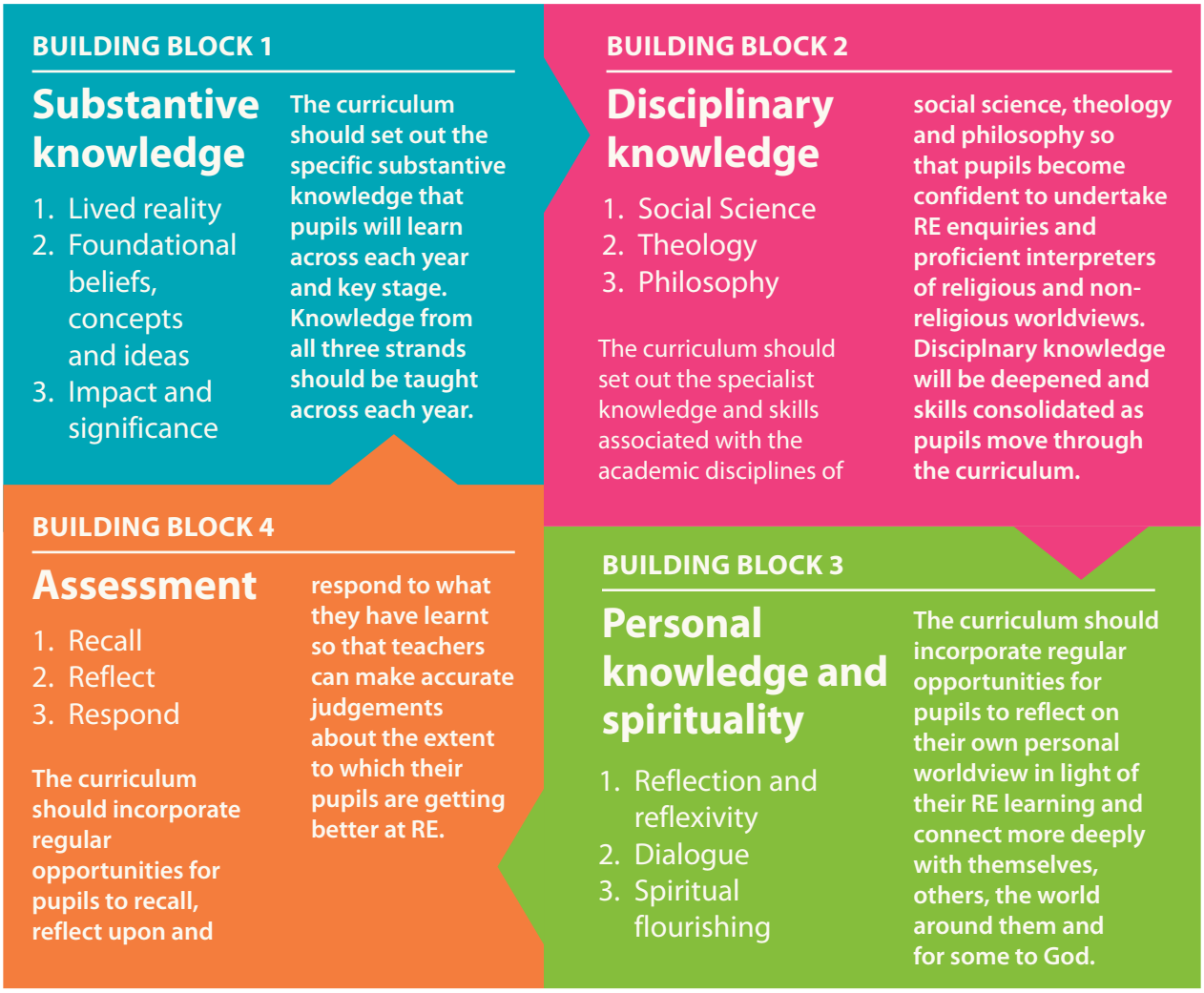
Assessment

The RE curriculum should incorporate regular opportunities for pupils to recall substantive knowledge, demonstrate disciplinary knowledge, reflect on the impact and significance of what they have learnt and respond thoughtfully, imaginatively and creatively to RE subject matter.

When putting together the RE curriculum, subject leaders should ensure that all four building blocks are used as the basis for curriculum design and specific RE enquiries.

Combining the building blocks effectively will enable teachers to deliver an engaging curriculum which exemplifies the pedagogical approach outlined in this syllabus.

Combining the syllabus building blocks



BUILDING BLOCK 1
Substantive knowledge

There are three strands of substantive knowledge which pupils should learn about:

- **Strand 1: lived reality** – how people experience lived religion and non-religion. The specific content chosen should reflect the rich diversity that exists both within and between religious and non-religious worldviews.
- **Strand 2: foundational beliefs, concepts and ideas** – the foundational beliefs, concepts and ideas that characterise religious and non-religious worldviews. Pupils should also have the opportunity to reflect on the concepts of 'belief', 'religion' and 'worldview'.
- **Strand 3: impact and significance** – matters of central importance to religious and non-religious worldviews, their influence and power and how they offer meaning and purpose to people, providing them with shared values, morality and guidance.

The specific substantive knowledge selected by schools should be sequenced carefully so that pupils build on previous learning and acquire greater depth of knowledge as they progress through the curriculum.

BUILDING BLOCK 2
Disciplinary knowledge

Pupils should be taught disciplinary knowledge (ways of knowing) so that they can become 'RE experts' equipped with the specialist knowledge and specialist skills to become proficient interpreters of religious and non-religious worldviews.

In this syllabus, disciplinary knowledge is developed primarily through the disciplines of theology, human/social sciences and philosophy. These disciplines are contextualised for a school setting and are defined as:

- **Theology** [BELIEVING] – the study of people's beliefs (not just the study of God), what these are, where they come from, how they are shared, how they can change over time and the different ways they are interpreted.
- **Social Science** [LIVING] – the study of the way people live their lives, considering how and why people live the way they do and how context affects this.
- **Philosophy** [THINKING] – the study of how people know and reason about themselves and the world around them.

BUILDING BLOCK 3
Personal knowledge and spirituality

The RE curriculum should enable pupils to consider their own way of seeing and making sense of the world (personal worldview) by reflecting on their own beliefs, values, ideas and assumptions in light of their RE learning. Personal knowledge includes developing a greater understanding of personal beliefs, values and opinions (positionality), how these are shaped and informed, as well as recognising and respecting alternative positions.

By engaging critically with RE subject matter, pupils should become more self-aware of the factors which influence the way they view and engage with other people and the world around them. There should be regular opportunities for pupils to:

- reflect on their own values, assumptions, beliefs and ideas in light of their learning (reflection and reflexivity)
- demonstrate intellectual humility and engage in discussion which reflects diverse perspectives (dialogue)
- respond creatively and imaginatively to RE subject matter so they can make meaning, connect more deeply to themselves, others, the world, the transcendent and for some, to God (spiritual flourishing).

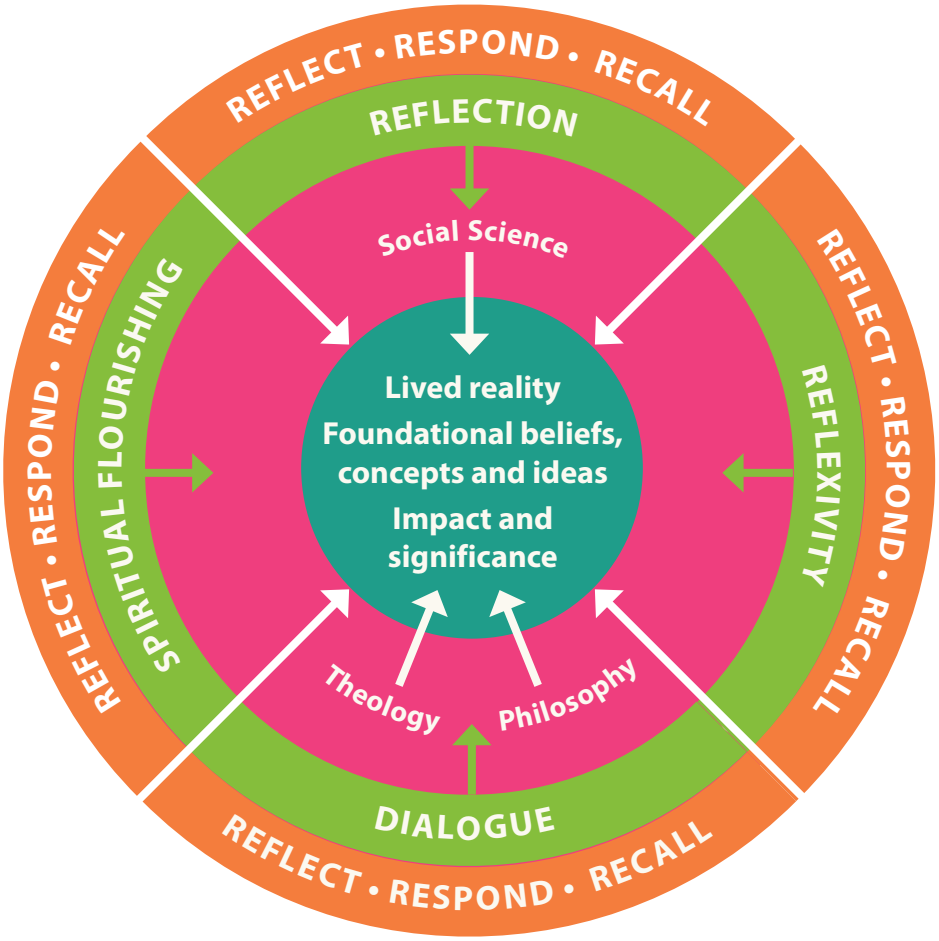
BUILDING BLOCK 4
Assessment

Pupils should be provided with regular opportunities to recall, reflect and respond to the RE subject matter. The curriculum should incorporate regular opportunities for pupils to:

- remember the core content of the syllabus, including specific substantive knowledge and specialist disciplinary knowledge and demonstrate increasing depth of knowledge (**Recall**)
- think critically so they can demonstrate depth of understanding about the impact and significance of religious and non-religious worldviews, religion itself and belief (**Reflect**)
- demonstrate personal insight and discernment (**Respond**).

The four building blocks should be considered in an holistic way. Although each building block is distinct, elements of each one should be woven together as the basis for planning individual RE enquiries.

Using the building blocks as the basis for RE enquiries



2.4 Requirements for Early Years Foundation Stage

Pupils should receive 36 hours per year RE, integrated with the EYFS areas of learning and development as set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage framework (EYFS Statutory Framework, September 2025).

Pupils in the EYFS should encounter Christianity and other principal religions and worldviews as they are experienced in the local community and other parts of Great Britain. When deciding about which religious and non-religious worldviews to include, schools should take into consideration the local context and local faith communities (see Table 1 on page 4).

When planning the EYFS curriculum teachers should ensure:

- the four building blocks are used as the basis for planning
- RE enquiries are relevant and engaging for the age group being taught
- sufficient time is allocated to teach the content effectively (the equivalent of 1 hour per week which could be delivered as standalone RE sessions and/or through continuous provision). For Church of England schools, the syllabus time requirements are a minimum expectation. Teachers should also refer to Church of England guidance.
- the RE subject matter prepares pupils for learning in KS1

- pupils can make connections across RE enquiries and to other subject areas
- they provide regular opportunities for pupils to recall, reflect and respond to their RE learning (see Part 3, Assessment page 58)
- they enrich the curriculum through visits, visitors, imaginative use of ICT, artefacts, and creative opportunities.

Using the Syllabus to design the EYFS Curriculum

For the religions and worldviews pupils' encounter at EYFS teachers should ensure that they reference the syllabus building blocks.

BUILDING BLOCK 1
Substantive knowledge

Over the EYFS pupils should learn about:

- **Strand 1: lived reality** – the lived reality of religious and non-religious worldviews in a way that connects to their own lives and experiences
- **Strand 2: foundational beliefs and ideas** – some of the key beliefs and ideas which characterise the religious and non-religious worldviews they are studying
- **Strand 3: impact and significance –** the impact and significance of the religious and non-religious worldviews they have encountered in a way that connects to their own lives and experiences.

The substantive knowledge taught should enable pupils to make sense of their physical world and their community (EYFS Understanding the World). Pupils should be able to:

- recall examples of how people with religious or non-religious worldviews might live in different ways
- recall special stories and special people that are associated with religious and non-religious worldviews
- know that religious and non-religious worldviews can influence how people act and behave
- know that people who belong to different religious and non-religious traditions believe different things
- recognise similarities and differences across religious and non-religious worldviews
- appreciate that religious and non-religious worldviews are important to many families in their local community and across Great Britain
- use RE vocabulary correctly.

BUILDING BLOCK 2
Disciplinary knowledge

Across EYFS pupils should be introduced to the disciplinary lenses of social science, theology and philosophy. At EYFS, teachers should introduce these disciplines as 'Living' (Social Science), 'Believing' (Theology) and 'Thinking' (Philosophy).

By the end of the EYFS the disciplinary knowledge introduced should enable pupils to:

- know that religious worldviews are often associated with special people and special stories which can be found in holy books and that non-religious worldviews also have special stories and people
- ask questions and share ideas about special stories and special people
- ask questions about good and bad and right and wrong, based on the stories they have encountered
- learn about other people and their different ways of living
- talk to people, look at images and artwork, handle special objects and visit special places
- know that asking questions and thinking about the answers can help them understand more about the world, themselves and other people.

BUILDING BLOCK 3
Personal knowledge and spirituality

Across EYFS pupils should be provided with opportunities to reflect on their learning so that they can make links to their own lives and experiences. They should also be provided with opportunities that enable them to think more deeply about themselves, others, the world around them and a divine being or God.

Over the EYFS pupils should have opportunities to:

- talk about their own feelings and experiences and share their own ideas
- listen carefully to other people and ask them questions
- use their senses, imagination and curiosity to deepen their appreciation of the world in which they live and explore things that are mysterious and puzzling
- ask questions and offer answers.

BUILDING BLOCK 4
Assessment

Throughout the EYFS pupils should be given regular opportunities to recall the core substantive and disciplinary knowledge they have been taught, reflect on the impact and significance of the religious and non-religious worldviews they have studied and respond to the subject matter in ways which allow them to demonstrate their own feelings, ideas, beliefs, values, imagination and creativity.

By the end of EYFS pupils should be able to:

- remember and recall the specific substantive and disciplinary knowledge they have been taught about the religious and non-religious worldviews they have encountered using correct RE vocabulary
- give thoughtful answers to RE questions and enquiries
- share their own ideas and feelings in a variety of ways about the big ideas they have explored
- begin to understand what a religious and non-religious worldview is and know whether they or their family have one.

Using the syllabus to plan RE enquiries

STEP 1
Coherence and sequencing – progression of learning

RE subject leaders, in discussion with EYFS teachers, should produce a coherent and sequenced RE curriculum map (long term plan). EYFS practitioners should refer to this when planning individual RE enquiries. Across the EYFS the RE enquiries should incorporate all four building blocks. RE enquiries should be structured around a Key Enquiry question (KEQ). The core content selected for each enquiry should prepare pupils for learning in KS1. It is beneficial to use a framework for planning, such as the 'Enquiry Cycle' to ensure clear progression of learning.

STEP 2
Planning enquiries and selecting content

Teachers have flexibility to plan enquiries in ways which meet the requirements of the syllabus and the expectations for the Areas of Learning and Early Learning Goals as set out in the EYFS Framework. In EYFS all three strands of substantive knowledge should be covered and all three disciplines introduced. Teachers should also ensure that as part of each enquiry they provide opportunities for pupils to link what they are learning about to their own experiences, ideas, beliefs and values (Building block 3 – Personal knowledge and spirituality).

STEP 3
Planning assessment

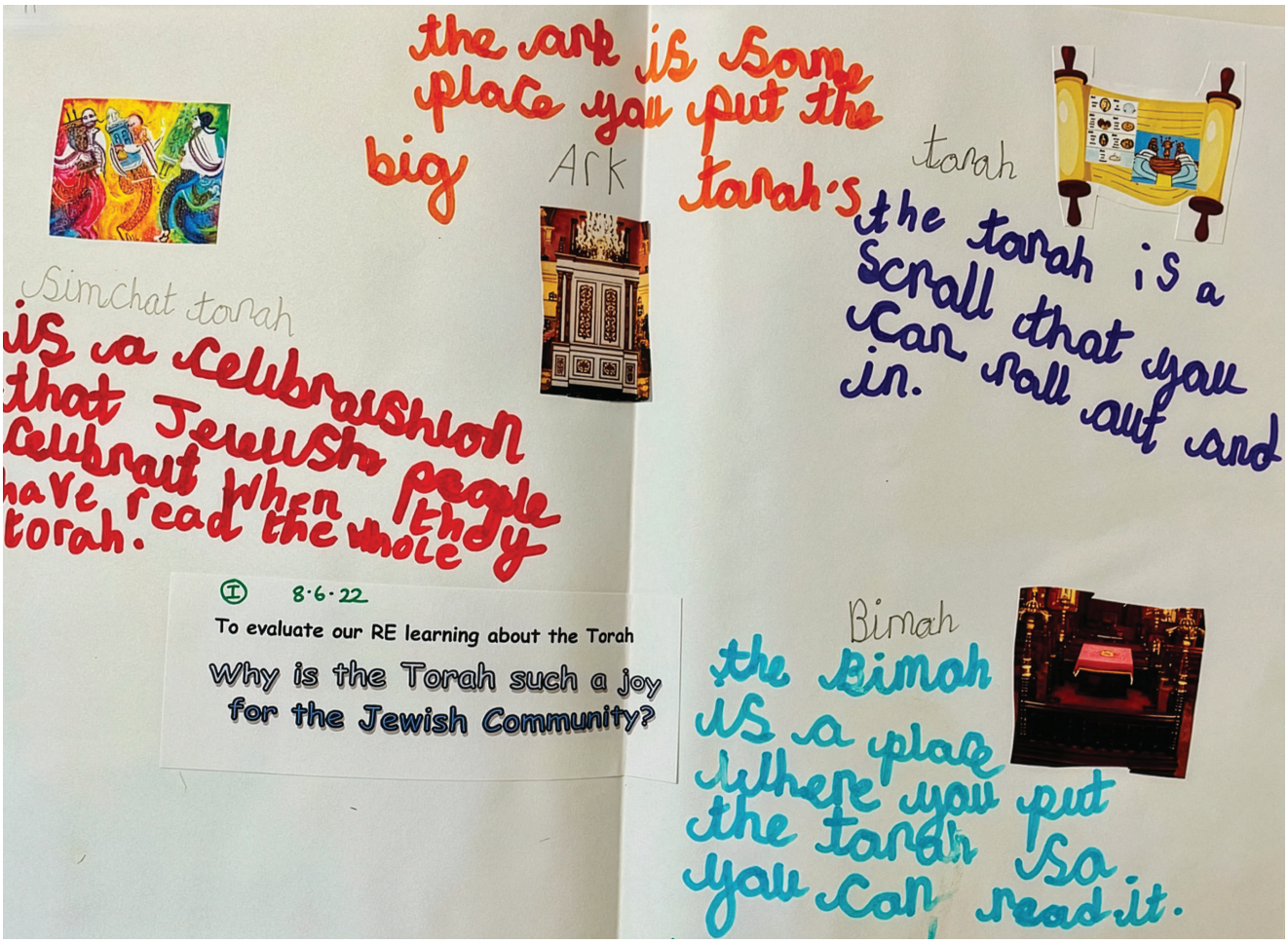
Teachers should be clear about the outcomes of each enquiry and explicit about what pupils are expected to know, understand and be able to do as a result of it. They should plan regular opportunities for assessing both the substantive and disciplinary knowledge that has been taught. It is not appropriate to assess personal knowledge formally. More detailed information about assessment can be found in Part 3 Assessment on page 58.

STEP 4
Pedagogy and Practice – selecting activities and tasks

Once teachers have selected the content of the RE enquiry and are clear about what they will assess, they should select the specific activities and tasks that will engage the pupils in their class. Classroom practice and pedagogy should reflect the religion and worldviews approach adopted by this syllabus. Teachers should draw on a range of high quality resources and materials.

Church of England schools

The building blocks have been designed to enable teachers to fulfil the statutory requirements for RE and meet the expectations of the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education. Subject leaders and early years practitioners in Church of England schools should use the resources and materials recommended by the Church of England to help deliver some of the content of this syllabus. Where necessary, resources should be adapted so that they meet the expectations of the religion and worldviews approach outlined in this syllabus.



Religious Education and EYFS Early Learning Goals

RE content sits naturally with a number of the Early Learning Goals enabling teachers to make links. Some examples are shown in the table below.

Early learning goals	Possible links to RE enquiries
Communication and language listening, attention and understanding • Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions • Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding • Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.	• Listen carefully to sacred and other special stories, for example, the Story of Creation, Ganesha, Muhammad and the Ants and talk about them with each other and with adults • Share their own ideas about what they have heard and listen to the ideas of others • Ask questions about what they find puzzling, exciting, and interesting about the celebrations and festivals they have encountered.
Speaking • Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary • Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate • Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.	• Look carefully at a range of images such as the Nativity, Hannukah, Diwali, Holi and ask questions about what they find puzzling or interesting • Talk about their own celebrations and special times using full sentences • Act out and talk about the story of Palm Sunday.
Literacy comprehension • Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary • Anticipate – where appropriate – key events in stories • Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role-play.	• Answer questions about and retell stories from the religious and non-religious worldviews they have encountered using specific vocabulary • Listen to special and sacred stories and predict the actions of key characters, using their correct names.

Early learning goals	Possible links to RE enquiries
Understanding the world – past and present • Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society • Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class • Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.	• Talk about the lives of people they have met, for example, the vicar or Imam, children from different faith communities they have encountered • Explain how non-religious families might welcome a new baby. Recall differences and similarities to how other families welcome new babies • Talk about the things and the people they can see on Christmas cards and spot differences between things in the past and now.
People, culture and communities • Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps • Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class • Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and, when appropriate, maps.	• Describe the things they can see in their local church or other place of worship and use the correct names/vocabulary • Look at pictures of special places they encounter, for example, church, mosque, synagogue and talk about the different things they can see • Recall ways different families celebrate major festivals, for example, Christmas, Easter, Diwali sharing their own experiences and making comparisons.
The natural world • Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants • Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class • Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.	• Go on a nature walk observing and talking about the diversity they see • Talk about the wonders of the natural world and make connections to their RE learning • Respond to images of ways of living from different parts of the world.

Early learning goals	Possible links to RE enquiries
Expressive arts and design **Creating with materials** • Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function. • Share their creations, explaining the process they have used • Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories.	• Create their own Christmas card in response to the nativity and the incarnation • Talk about an Easter garden they have created in response to the Easter story • Respond creatively such as through role play, drama, art, music to the stories they have encountered.
Being imaginative and expressive • Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher • Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs • Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and, when appropriate, try to move in time with music.	• Imagine what it might be like to be a character in one of the special stories they have encountered • Imagine what it might be like for a Muslim baby to hear the Adhan whispered in their ear • Sing special songs such as carols or hymns in a church with other people.

The following overviews show how an enquiry might reflect the syllabus expectations. These overviews are designed to support non-specialist teachers and are intended as guidance only.

EYFS OVERVIEW 1

How do Christians care for the world?

LESSON 1

Engage with the idea of a wonderful world and the idea of creation

- What things do you like in the world?
- What is your favourite bit of nature?
- Who made the world?
- Could you make the world?
- What would you make?

Opportunity for pupils to share their own ideas (personal knowledge) and think about the world.

LESSON 2

Enquire into the Christian belief in creation

- What do Christians believe about creation?
- What do Christians believe about looking after the world?
- What would happen if we didn't look after the world?

Opportunity to introduce 'believing' lens and for pupils to think about looking after the world.

LESSON 3

Explore the Christian story of creation

- What is the story of creation in the Bible?
- What do you think is the most important part of the story?
- What do you think the story makes people want to do?

Opportunity to introduce 'believing' skills – retelling and sharing ideas about and responding to parts of the story.

LESSON 4

Explore how Christians treasure creation

- How do Christians celebrate and enjoy God's world?
- How do you celebrate and enioy the world?

Opportunity to develop 'living' disciplinary knowledge and for pupils to share their own ideas and respond to the world around them.

LESSON 5

Explore the ways Christians look after the world

- What do Christians do to look after the world?
- Does your family do anything to look after the world?

Opportunity to consolidate 'living' disciplinary knowledge and for pupils to share personal knowledge.

LESSON 6

Evaluate and express understanding and ideas about the Christian belief in creation

- What have we learnt about the Creation story and how Christians look after the world?
- What ideas do we have about caring for the world?

Opportunity for summative assessment for pupils to reflect on personal knowledge.

EYFS OVERVIEW 2

Why are some stories special?

LESSON 1 — Engage with the idea of special stories

- What story is special to me?
- Why is the story special to me?
- Does everyone have the same special stories?

Opportunity for pupils to think about and share their own special stories.

LESSON 2 — Enquire into religions and believing

- Who is Theo and what does he like to do?
- What do we remember about Christianity?
- Who are Vesper, Yusuf and Nyal?

Opportunity to introduce 'believing' lens and recall previous learning.

LESSON 3 — Explore a special story In Christianity

- What story is special to Vesper?
- What questions would Theo ask about this story?
- Why is this story special to Vesper?
- What do we think about the story?

(The Lost Sheep)

Opportunity to assess skills of textual analysis and interpretation (retelling/talk about meaning).

LESSON 4 Explore a special story in Islam

- What stories are special to Yusuf?
- What questions would Theo ask about these stories?
- Why are these special stories for Yusuf?
- What do we think about these stories?

(Muhammad and the Ants / Muhammad and The Crying Camel)

Opportunity to assess skills of textual analysis and recall of 'sticky' knowledge.

LESSON 5 Explore a special story in Hinduism

- What story is special to Nyal?
- What questions would Theo ask about this story?
- Why is this story special to Nyal?
- What do we think about this story?

(Krishna and the Fruit Seller)

Opportunity to assess skills of textual analysis and recall of 'sticky' knowledge.

LESSON 6 Evaluate core learning

- What do we remember about Vesper, Yusuf and Nyal?
- What do we remember about their special stories?

Opportunity for summative assessment – recall of core knowledge.

LESSON 7 Express ideas about special stories

- Why are some stories special?
- Does everyone have the same special stories?

Opportunity to reflect and respond to special stories. Which is your favourite story?

2.5 **Requirements for Key Stage 1 (KS1)**

During KS1 pupils should receive 36 hours RE per year. This equates to 1 hour per week. Pupils should learn about the key characteristics of the religious and non-religious worldviews they study in order to understand their significance and impact locally and across Great Britain. Pupils should be able to demonstrate understanding, use accurate RE specific vocabulary, ask meaningful questions, apply their learning and share their own ideas.

Over KS1 pupils must learn about:
- Christianity
- at least one other principal religious worldview and
- a religious community with a significant local presence and/or
- a non-religious worldview such as Humanism.

Schools should consider the following points when deciding upon a second principal religious worldview:
- the connections between the Abrahamic religions of Christianity, Judaism and Islam
- understanding of non-Abrahamic religions such as Hinduism or Sikhism
- the local context (See Table 1 on page 4) and local faith communities
- coherence and progression of learning.

When planning the KS1 curriculum teachers should ensure:
- the syllabus building blocks are used as the basis for curriculum design
- RE enquiries are relevant and engaging for the age group being taught
- sufficient time is allocated to teach the content effectively (1 hour per week or its equivalent) For Church of England schools the syllabus requirements are a minimum expectation. Teachers should refer to Church of England guidance
- enquiries build on learning in the EYFS and prepare pupils for learning in KS2
- enquiries are sequenced carefully so that pupils can connect learning across each year and the key stage as a whole
- they plan regular opportunities for pupils to recall, reflect and respond to the subject matter they have been taught (see Part 3, Assessment on page 58).
- they enrich the curriculum through visits, visitors, imaginative use of ICT, artefacts, and creative opportunities.

Using the syllabus to design the KS1 curriculum

For the religious and non-religious worldviews pupils encounter at KS1 teachers must ensure that they use the syllabus building blocks as the starting point for their planning.

BUILDING BLOCK 1
Substantive knowledge

Over the key stage the substantive knowledge taught must include:

Strand 1: lived reality – the lived reality of religious and non-religious worldviews as they are experienced by individuals and communities across Great Britain, and which reflect the richness and diversity which is to be found within and across different traditions.

Strand 2: foundational beliefs and ideas – the foundational beliefs and ideas which characterise the religious and non-religious worldviews they are studying.

Strand 3: impact and significance – the impact and significance of religious and non-religious worldviews in their local community and Great Britain.

RE enquiries should be planned so that across the key stage there is a balance of all three strands.



The substantive knowledge taught over the key stage should enable pupils to:

- recall specific examples of the religious and non-religious worldviews they have studied and use correct RE vocabulary
- know that there are different ways of living in Great Britain which can be influenced by when people lived, where they live and who they live with
- understand that people with different religious and non-religious worldviews believe different things
- recognise similarities and differences between the religious and non-religious worldviews they study
- appreciate that religious and non-religious worldviews are important to many families in Great Britain today and guide people on how to live well together.

BUILDING BLOCK 2
Disciplinary knowledge

Across the key stage pupils should be introduced to the disciplinary lenses of social science, theology and philosophy and the methodologies and skills that are used by social scientists, theologians and philosophers to explore RE subject matter. At KS1 teachers may find it helpful to refer to these academic disciplines as 'Living' (Social Science), 'Believing' (Theology) and 'Thinking' (Philosophy).

The disciplinary knowledge introduced over the key stage should enable pupils to:

- know that religious worldviews are often associated with special people and special stories which can be found in holy books and that non-religious worldviews also have stories and people which are special
- ask questions and share ideas about the special stories and special people they have studied
- recognise that stories and texts can contain 'hidden' meaning and suggest what these might be
- learn about other people and their ways of living
- talk to people, study photographs, artwork and special objects, visit special places and ask questions about these places, objects, artefacts and images
- ask questions about good and bad, right and wrong and think carefully about the answers
- know that asking questions and thinking about the answers can help them understand more about the world, themselves and other people.

BUILDING BLOCK 3
Personal knowledge and spirituality

Across the key stage pupils should be provided with opportunities to reflect on their learning in ways that enable them to think more

deeply about themselves, others, the world around them and a divine being or God.

Over the key stage pupils should have opportunities to:

- talk about their own experiences and feelings
- share their own ideas
- listen carefully and respectfully to other people and ask them questions
- use their senses, imagination and curiosity to deepen their appreciation of and connections to the world in which they live, exploring things that are mysterious and puzzling
- ask questions and think carefully about the answers.

BUILDING BLOCK 4 Assessment

Throughout KS1 pupils should be given regular opportunities to recall the core substantive and disciplinary knowledge they have been taught, reflect on the impact and significance of the religious and non-religious worldviews they have studied and respond to the RE subject matter in ways which allow them to demonstrate their own feelings, ideas, beliefs and values.

By the end of KS1 teachers should have obtained sufficient evidence about the extent to which their pupils:

- remember and recall the substantive knowledge and disciplinary knowledge they have been taught
- make connections and notice similarities and differences
- use RE vocabulary correctly
- identify and apply some disciplinary skills
- give thoughtful answers to RE key enquiry questions
- share their own ideas and feelings in a variety of ways about the big ideas they have explored
- share their ideas about the impact and significance of the religious and non-religious worldviews they have encountered.

Using the syllabus to plan KS1 enquiries

STEP 1
Coherence and sequencing – progression of learning

RE subject leaders, in discussion with KS1 teachers, should produce a coherent and sequenced RE curriculum map (long term plan). KS1 teachers should refer to this when planning individual RE enquiries. Enquiries should be structured around 'Key Enquiry Questions' (KEQ). The core content selected for each enquiry should build on learning in the EYFS and prepare pupils for learning in KS2. It is beneficial to use a framework for planning enquiries, such as the 'Enquiry Cycle' to ensure clear progression of learning.

STEP 2
Planning enquiries and selecting content

The KEQs and core content should reflect the syllabus building blocks. Teachers have flexibility to focus on specific aspects of these within individual enquiries. For example, an enquiry could be built around a particular celebration (Strand 1) explored through a 'living' lens. Another enquiry might focus on a foundational belief (Strand 2) and sacred story using a 'believing' lens before looking at how this belief shapes daily living (Strand 1) when looked at through a 'living' lens.

Across the key stage, all three strands of substantive knowledge should be covered and all three disciplines introduced. Teachers should also ensure that as part of each enquiry they provide opportunities for pupils to link what they are learning about to their own experiences, ideas, beliefs and values and respond imaginatively and creatively

to the subject matter (Building Block 3 – personal knowledge and spirituality).

STEP 3
Planning assessment

Teachers should be explicit about the outcomes of each RE enquiry and clear about what they expect pupils to know, understand and be able to do as a result of it. They should plan regular opportunities for assessing substantive and disciplinary knowledge using a combination of formative and summative assessment. It is not appropriate to assess personal knowledge formally. More detailed information about assessment can be found in Part 3 on page 58.

STEP 4
Pedagogy and practice – selecting activities and tasks

Once teachers have selected the content of the RE enquiry and are clear about what and how they will assess, they should select the specific activities and tasks that will engage the pupils in their class. Classroom practice and pedagogy should reflect the religion and worldviews approach adopted by this syllabus. Teachers should draw on a range of high quality resources and materials.

Church of England schools

The building blocks have been designed to enable teachers to fulfil the statutory requirements for RE and meet the expectations of the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education. Subject leaders and teachers in Church of England schools should use the resources and materials recommended by the Church of England to help deliver some of the content of this syllabus. Where necessary, resources should be adapted so that they meet the expectations of the religion and worldviews approach outlined in this syllabus.

The following overviews show how an enquiry might reflect the syllabus expectations. These overviews are designed to support non specialist teachers and are intended as guidance only.



KS1 OVERVIEW 1

Why is Eid a big day for Muslim children?

LESSON 1

Engage with family celebrations and enquire into Islam

- When do we have special parties?
- Who do we celebrate with?
- What do we remember about Muslim families?
- What celebrations does Omar have?

Opportunity to share own experiences and recall previous learning.

LESSON 2

Enquire into fasting and Ramadan. Explore the festival of Eid-ul-Fitr

- What does it mean to fast?
- What is Ramadam?
- What does it mean to feast?
- What happens at Eid-ul-Fitr?

Opportunity to introduce 'living' lens disciplinary knowledge.

LESSON 3

Explore different Eid traditions

- How do different Muslim families celebrate Eid?
- What foods are cooked for the Eid meal?

Opportunity to focus on 'living' lens and diversity of practice and respond to Eid foods.

LESSON 4

Exploring the significance of Eid for Muslim children

- What has Eid got to do with giving and saying 'thank you'?

Opportunity to look through 'believing' lens disciplinary knowledge.

LESSON 5

Evaluate core learning about Eid

- What have we learnt about Eid?
- Why is Eid a big day for Muslim children?

Opportunity for summative assessment – recall of unit 'sticky' knowledge.

LESSON 6

Express understanding and insight about Eid and its significance

- Why are celebrations important to people?
- What difference does it make to be generous and grateful?
- Why is Eid an important celebration for Muslim families?

Opportunity for pupils to reflect on significance of Eid and key ideas/concepts.

KS1 OVERVIEW 2

Why might sacred things be important to some people?

LESSON 1

Engage with the idea of precious things

- What things are special and precious to us?
- Why are they special?
- How do we treat precious things?

Opportunity for pupils to share their own ideas.

LESSON 2

Enquire into the meaning of 'sacred' and 'holy'

- What do the words 'sacred'and 'holy' mean?
- What do we remember about Judaism?
- What do we already know about Christianity?

Opportunity to extend vocabulary and recall previous learning.

LESSON 3

Explore sacred objects and places for Jewish families

- What objects might be sacred for Jewish families?
- What is sacred and holy about a synagogue?
- What things are sacred and holy in a synagogue?

Opportunity to look through 'living' lens.

LESSON 4

Explore sacred objects and places for Christian families

- What objects might be sacred for Christian families?
- What is sacred and holy about a church?
- What things might be sacred or holy in a church?

Opportunity to visit local church (living lens)

LESSON 5

Explore different Christian churches

- What can we learn from looking at different churches?
- Why are churches different?
- Are different things sacred to different Christians?

Opportunity to assess skills of textual analysis and recall of 'sticky' knowledge.

LESSON 6

Evaluate core learning

- What things are sacred and important in synagogues and churches?

Opportunity for summative assessment – recall of core knowledge

LESSON 7

Express ideas about what things are sacred and holy to people.

- What difference does it make if something is sacred?
- Does everyone agree about what is sacred and holy?
- What things might be sacred and holy to you?

Opportunity to reflect on idea of the sacred and pupils' own and ideas experiences (respond).

2.6 **Requirements for KS2**

During KS2 pupils should receive 45 hours per year RE. This equates to 1 1/4 hour per week. At KS2 pupils should learn about the key characteristics of the religious and non-religious worldviews they study in order to understand their significance and impact in Great Britain and globally. Pupils should be able to demonstrate understanding, use accurate and extensive RE specific vocabulary, ask and answer meaningful questions, apply their learning to new contexts and share their own ideas about the extent to which their RE learning has shaped their own personal worldview.

Over KS2 pupils must learn about:
- Christianity
- at least two other principal religious worldviews and
- a religious community with a significant local presence and/or
- a non-religious worldview such as Humanism.

Schools should consider the following points when deciding upon a second principal religious worldview:
- the connections between the Abrahamic religions of Christianity, Judaism and Islam;
- understanding of non-Abrahamic religions such as Hinduism or Sikhism
- the local context (see Table 1 on page 4) and local faith communities
- coherence and progression of learning.

When planning the KS2 curriculum teachers should ensure:
- the syllabus building blocks are used as the basis for curriculum design
- RE enquiries are relevant and engaging for the age group being taught
- sufficient time is allocated to teach the content effectively. For Church of England schools the syllabus requirements are a minimum expectation. Teachers should refer to Church of England guidance.
- enquiries build on learning in KS1 and prepare pupils for learning in KS3
- enquiries are sequenced carefully so that pupils can connect learning across each year and the key stage
- they plan regular opportunities for pupils to recall, reflect and respond to the subject matter they have been taught (see Part 3: Assessment on page 58).
- they enrich the curriculum through visits, visitors, imaginative use of ICT, artefacts, and creative opportunities.

Using the syllabus to design the KS2 curriculum

For the religious and non-religious worldviews pupils' encounter at KS2 teachers must ensure that they use the syllabus building blocks as the starting point for their planning.

BUILDING BLOCK 1
Substantive knowledge

Over the key stage the substantive knowledge taught must include:

Strand 1: lived reality – the lived reality of religious and non-religious worldviews as they are experienced by individuals and communities in Great Britain and globally and which reflect the richness and diversity which is to be found within and across different traditions.

Strand 2: foundational beliefs and ideas – the foundational beliefs and ideas which characterise the religious and non-religious worldviews they are studying.

Strand 3: impact and significance – the impact and significance of religious and non-religious worldviews in communities, organisations and societies locally, nationally and globally.

RE enquiry units should be planned so that across KS2 there is a balance of all three strands.

The substantive knowledge taught over the key stage should enable pupils to:

- recall specific examples of the religious and non-religious worldviews they have studied and use correct RE vocabulary
- know that there are diverse ways of living within and across different religious and non-religious worldviews
- understand that the way people live is shaped by many things such as time, place, culture and gender
- Recall the foundational beliefs and key concepts of the religious and non-religious worldviews they have encountered drawing comparisons
- recognise how organised religious and non-religious worldviews can create a sense of belonging and identity and give people a sense of meaning and purpose
- appreciate how religious and non-religious worldviews can help provide answers to the 'big' questions people ask about God, the meaning of life, morality and ethics.

BUILDING BLOCK 2
Disciplinary knowledge

Across KS2 pupils should deepen their understanding of the disciplines of social science ('Living'), Theology ('Believing') and Philosophy ('Thinking') and the methodologies and skills that are used by social scientists, theologians and philosophers to explore RE content. At lower KS2 teachers may find it helpful to introduce the terminology of 'social science', 'theology' and 'philosophy'. By years 5 and 6 pupils should be familiar with these terms.

The disciplinary knowledge introduced over the key stage should enable pupils to:

- know that there are different ways to study ways of living which include engaging with case studies, artefacts, architecture and data
- identify the ways in which context shapes how people express their beliefs
- appreciate that studying sacred texts, stories and images can help them understand more about peoples' worldviews and ways of living
- recognise that stories and texts can contain 'hidden' meaning and offer thoughtful suggestions about what these might be
- recognise that people interpret stories and texts in different ways and that these interpretations can change over time
- appreciate that people think about and reason differently to make sense of the world, others and themselves
- consider questions about the reliability of sources of information and recognise their limitations
- learn the specialist skills associated with the disciplines of social science, theology and philosophy e.g. textual analysis and interpretation, data analysis, ranking questions, reasoning, hypothesising and debating and apply these to RE enquiries.

BUILDING BLOCK 3
Personal knowledge and spirituality

Across the key stage pupils should be provided with opportunities to reflect on their learning considering their own experiences and personal worldview and in ways that enable them to think more deeply about themselves, others, the world around them and a divine being or God.

Over the key stage pupils should be able to:

- talk about their own ways of living and reflect on their personal worldview
- share their own ideas and consider ways in which these have been challenged by their RE learning
- listen carefully and respectfully to other people's ideas, beliefs and values
- engage their senses, be curious, creative and

imaginative and explore things that they find mysterious and puzzling
- question, challenge and think deeply about the big questions of life.

BUILDING BLOCK 4 Assessment

Over KS2 pupils should be given regular opportunities to recall the core substantive and disciplinary knowledge they have been taught, reflect on the impact and significance of the religious and non-religious worldviews they have studied and respond to the subject matter in a variety of creative and imaginative ways which allow them to demonstrate their feelings, ideas, beliefs and values. Additional information about assessment can be found in Part 3 on page 58.

By the end of KS2 teachers should have obtained sufficient evidence about the extent to which pupils:
- have extended and deepened their substantive and disciplinary knowledge
- draw comparisons and make connections
- use RE vocabulary and terminology correctly
- give thoughtful and considered answers to RE key enquiry questions
- apply disciplinary skills to RE enquiries
- respond creatively and imaginatively to RE subject matter
- share their own opinions, ideas and feelings about the big ideas they have explored
- articulate how their RE learning has shaped and challenged their personal worldview.

Using the syllabus to plan KS2 enquiries

STEP 1
Coherence and sequencing – progression of learning

RE subject leaders, in discussion with KS2 teachers, should produce a coherent and sequenced RE curriculum map (long term plan). KS2 teachers should refer to this when planning individual RE enquiries. Enquiries should be structured around 'Key Enquiry Questions' (KEQ). The core content selected for each unit should enable pupils to build on learning in KS1 and prepare them for learning in KS3. It is beneficial to use a framework for planning enquiries, such as the 'Enquiry Cycle' to ensure clear progression of learning.

Step 2
Planning enquiries and selecting content

The KEQs and subject matter should reflect the syllabus building blocks. Teachers have the flexibility to focus on specific aspects of these within individual enquiries. For example, an enquiry might focus on ways of living and diversity of practice within the Hindu community (Strand 1) explored through a 'living' (social science) lens. Another enquiry might focus on a foundational belief in Christianity (Strand 2) explored through a theological (believing) lens before considering how this belief shapes ways of living for particular Christians (Strand 1) when looked at through a social science lens.

Over KS2 all three strands of substantive knowledge should be covered and all three disciplines taught. Teachers should also ensure that as part of each enquiry they provide opportunities for pupils to link what they are learning about to their own experiences, ideas, beliefs and values and respond imaginatively and creatively to the subject matter (Building Block 3 – Personal knowledge and spirituality) so they are able to reflect on their own positionality and personal worldview.

STEP 3
Planning assessment

KS2 teachers should be explicit about the outcomes of each RE enquiry and clear about what they expect pupils to know, understand and be able to do because of it. They should plan regular opportunities for assessing substantive and disciplinary



knowledge using a combination of formative and summative assessment. It is not appropriate to assess personal knowledge formally. More detailed information about assessment can be found in Part 3 on page 58.

STEP 4
Pedagogy and practice – selecting activities and tasks

Once teachers have selected the content of the RE enquiry and are clear about what and how they will assess, they should select the specific activities and tasks that will engage the pupils in their class. Classroom practice and pedagogy should reflect the religion and worldviews approach adopted by this syllabus. Teachers should draw on a range of high quality resources and materials.

Church of England schools

The building blocks have been designed to enable teachers to fulfil the statutory requirements for RE and meet the expectations of the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education. Subject leaders and teachers in Church of England schools should use the resources and materials recommended by the Church of England to help deliver some of the content of this syllabus. Where necessary, resources should be adapted so that they meet the expectations of the religion and worldviews approach outlined in this syllabus.

The following overviews show how an enquiry might reflect the syllabus expectations. These overviews are designed to support non specialist teachers and are intended as guidance only.

KS2 OVERVIEW 1

What can stories tell us about ourselves, each other and the world around us?

LESSON 1

Engage with story telling and special stories. Enquire into the concepts of truth and wisdom

- What stories are special and important to me?
- What is the meaning of 'wisdom' and truth?

Opportunity for pupils to share their own ideas.

LESSON 2

Enquire into sacred stories

- What do we mean by sacred stories and holy books?
- What do we remember about the sacred stories we have studied this year?

Opportunity for recall of core knowledge from previous units.

LESSON 3

Explore sacred stories and their significance for believers and non-religious people

- What do religious people learn about themselves, each other and the world from their special stories?
- Do we need to read biblical stories in a special way?
- Does a religious story have something to teach everyone?

Opportunity for pupils to consolidate skills of textual analysis and interpretation.

LESSON 4

Explore the concept of wisdom in contemporary stories

- Do sacred stories inspire stories today?
- What is wisdom and is it important?
- Do other stories contain wisdom?
- What might they teach us?
- What sacred stories inspire me?

Opportunity to deepen understanding of philosophical lens and respond to sacred stories.

LESSON 5

Explore truth and wisdom in stories

- What do we know about the writers of ancient stories?
- Are stories in holy books true?
- Can made up stories be true?
- Are stories sources of wisdom?
- What do different people think?

Opportunity to provide context and deepen pupils' understanding of theological and philosophical lenses.

LESSON 6

Evaluate core learning

- What can stories teach us about ourselves, each other and the world around us?

Opportunity for summative assessment.

LESSON 7

Express ideas about what stories can tell us?

- What have I learnt about myself, others and the world around me from sacred stories?

Opportunity to focus on pupils' personal knowledge.

KS2 OVERVIEW 2

Should happiness be our goal in life? What do different people say?

LESSON 1

Engage with the idea of happiness and enquire into Humanism

- When have we been happy?
- What do we think happiness is?
- Is being happy what life is about?
- What is the 'Happy Human' symbol?
- What do we already know about Humanism?

Opportunity for pupils to reflect on their own beliefs and consider their personal worldview.

LESSON 2

Enquire into the concept of happiness

- What does the word happiness mean?
- Who was Aristotle and what did he say about happiness?
- What might we want to ask a Humanist about happiness?

Opportunity to consolidate disciplinary knowledge (philosophical lens).

LESSON 3

Explore Humanist beliefs about happiness

- What do Humanists say makes a happy human?
- What can we learn about the Humanist idea of happiness from Humanist texts?

Opportunity to consolidate and apply skills of textual analysis and interpretation (theological lens).

LESSON 4

Explore religious perspectives on happiness

- What do different religions say about happiness and the goal of life?

Opportunity to revisit previous learning and deepen understanding of key religious beliefs.

LESSON 5

Explore how different ideas about happiness shape how people live

- What rules might Humanists follow to achieve a happy life?
- What rules might religious people follow to achieve a happy life?
- What's the best way to find out?
- How might context shape these rules?

Opportunity to revisit social science lens and apply social science skills.

LESSON 6

Evaluate core learning

- Should happiness be our goal in life?
- What do different people say?

Opportunity for summative assessment of core substantive knowledge.

LESSON 7

Express understanding and ideas about the concept of happiness and living well

- Should happiness be my goal in life?
- What do I think?
- Has my enquiry into happiness shaped my own worldview?
- What are my rules for living well?

Opportunity for pupils to consider their own worldview in light of their learning.

2.7 **Requirements for KS3**

During KS3 pupils should receive 45 hours per year RE.

Over KS3 pupils must learn about:

- Christianity
- at least two other principal religious worldviews and
- a religious community with a significant local presence and/or
- a non-religious worldview.

Schools should consider the following points when deciding upon a second principal religious worldview:

- the connections between the Abrahamic religions of Christianity, Judaism and Islam
- understanding of non-Abrahamic religions such as Hinduism or Sikhism
- the local context (see Table 1 on page 4) and local faith communities
- coherence and progression of learning.

When planning the KS3 curriculum teachers should ensure:

- the syllabus building blocks are used as the basis for curriculum design
- RE enquiries are relevant and engaging for students
- sufficient time is allocated to teach the content effectively. For Church of England schools the syllabus requirements are a minimum expectation. Teachers should refer to Church of England guidance.
- enquiries build on learning in KS2 and prepare pupils for learning in KS4
- enquiries are sequenced carefully so that pupils can connect learning across each year and the key stage as a whole
- they plan regular opportunities for pupils to recall, reflect and respond to the subject matter they have been taught (see Part 3: Assessment on page 58).
- they enrich the curriculum through visits, visitors, imaginative use of ICT, artefacts, and creative opportunities.



Using the syllabus to design the KS3 curriculum

For the religious and non-religious worldviews pupils' encounter at KS3 teachers must ensure that they use the syllabus building blocks as the starting point for their planning.

BUILDING BLOCK 1
Substantive knowledge

Over the key stage the substantive knowledge taught must include:

Strand 1: lived reality – the lived reality of religious and non-religious worldviews as they are experienced by individuals and communities locally, nationally and globally and the extent to which this is shaped by context (time, place, culture, gender etc.) Case studies and examples should reflect the richness and diversity which is to be found within and across different traditions and consider the individual perspectives that exist within organised worldviews.

Strand 2: foundational beliefs and ideas – foundational beliefs, ideas and sources of authority which characterise the religious and non-religious worldviews studied; exploration of the concepts of 'religion', 'worldview' and 'belief' and their impact and significance in past and present times.

Strand 3: impact and significance – the impact and significance of religious and non-religious worldviews in communities, organisations and societies locally, nationally and globally; how religious and non-religious worldviews can create a sense of belonging and identity, meaning and purpose and help provide answers to questions about the nature and existence of God, the meaning of life, morality and ethics.

Across KS3 RE enquiries should be planned so that across the key stage there is a balance of all three strands.

BUILDING BLOCK 2
Disciplinary knowledge

Over KS3 pupils' knowledge and understanding of the disciplinary lenses of the social sciences, theology and philosophy should be deepened. The methodologies and skills that are used by social scientists, theologians and philosophers to explore RE content should be explored and consolidated.

The disciplinary knowledge taught over the key stage should enable pupils to:

- know that there are different ways to study RE subject matter and approach RE enquiries
- appreciate that the study of religious and non-religious worldviews is an interpretative endeavour
- identify the ways in which context shapes foundational beliefs, sources of authority and the ways people express their beliefs
- deepen their understanding of the discipline of theology and the methodologies and skills used by theologians (such as textual analysis and interpretation (hermeneutics)) so they are able to reflect on the context, authorship and authority of sacred texts; interpret, consider evidence and make judgements about texts; recognise that people interpret stories and texts in different ways and these interpretations are shaped by context and can change over time
- deepen their understanding of the social sciences and the methodologies and skills used by social scientists when exploring different ways of living (such as data analysis and ethnographic studies) so they are able to reflect on how context shapes the ways people express their beliefs and values
- deepen their understanding of philosophy and the methodologies and skills used by philosophers (such as reasoning, hypothesising, debating, conducting thought experiments) so they are able to appreciate that people think about and reason differently in order to make sense of the world, others and themselves; generate ideas and formulate opinions drawing on examples and evidence; justify their own ideas and opinions based on evidence and reasoning; construct arguments and present ideas clearly using precise terminology and ask, consider and answer questions about ethical and moral issues.
- consider questions about the reliability of sources of information and recognise their limitations.

BUILDING BLOCK 3
Personal knowledge and spirituality

Across the key stage pupils should be provided with opportunities to reflect on their learning considering their own experiences and personal worldview in ways that enable them to think more deeply about themselves, others, the world around them and a divine being or God.

Over the key stage pupils should be able to:
- talk about their own ways of living and reflect on their personal worldview
- share their own ideas and ways in which they have been challenged by their RE learning
- listen carefully and respectfully to other people's ideas, beliefs and values
- be curious, creative and imaginative and explore things that they find mysterious and puzzling
- question, challenge and think deeply about the big questions of life, reflecting on their own positionality
- examine their own beliefs, attitudes, motives and reactions in light of those of others (reflexivity).

BUILDING BLOCK 4
Assessment

Over KS3 pupils should be given regular opportunities to recall the core substantive and disciplinary knowledge they have been taught, reflect on the impact and significance of the religious and non-religious worldviews they have studied and respond to the subject matter in ways which allow them to demonstrate their own feelings, ideas, beliefs, values, imagination and creativity.

By the end of KS3 teachers should have obtained sufficient evidence about the extent to which their pupils can:
- remember and recall the specific substantive knowledge they have been taught, demonstrating depth of knowledge and using extensive RE vocabulary
- give thoughtful and considered answers to key enquiry questions
- respond creatively and imaginatively to RE subject matter
- share their own ideas and feelings about the big ideas they have explored demonstrating how their learning has shaped and challenged their personal worldview.

By the end of KS3 teachers should have obtained sufficient evidence about the extent to which pupils:
- have extended and deepened their substantive and disciplinary knowledge
- think critically and make connections
- use extensive RE vocabulary and terminology
- give thoughtful and considered answers to RE key enquiry questions
- apply disciplinary skills to RE enquiries
- respond creatively and imaginatively to RE subject matter
- reflect on their own opinions, ideas and feelings about the big ideas they have explored
- articulate how their RE learning has shaped and challenged their personal worldview.

Using the syllabus to plan KS3 enquiries

STEP 1
Coherence and sequencing - progression of learning

The RE Head of Department (HOD) in discussion with colleagues should produce a coherent and sequenced curriculum map (long term plan). Teachers should refer to this when planning RE enquiries. KS3 enquiries should reflect the syllabus building blocks and be structured around a 'Key Enquiry Question' (KEQ). The core content selected for each enquiry should enable pupils to build on learning in KS2 and prepare them for learning in KS4. It is beneficial to use a framework for planning enquiries, such as the 'Enquiry Cycle' to ensure clear progression of learning.

STEP 2
Devising the Key Enquiry Question (KEQ) and selecting content

The KEQs and selected subject matter should be based on the syllabus building blocks. Teachers have the flexibility to focus on specific aspects of these within individual enquiries. For example, an enquiry might

focus on diversity of worship traditions across two Christian denominations (Strand 1) explored through a social science lens. Another enquiry might focus the historical-social-geographical contexts of creation narratives (Strand 2) before considering the significance of these narratives in attitudes to environmentalism (Strand 1 and Strand 3) explored through all three disciplinary lenses.

Over KS3 all three strands of substantive knowledge should be covered and all three disciplines introduced. Teachers should also ensure that as part of each enquiry they provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on their personal knowledge, personal worldview and spirituality.

STEP 3
Planning assessment

KS3 teachers should be explicit about the outcomes of each RE enquiry and clear about what they expect pupils to know, understand and be able to do as a result of it. They should plan regular opportunities for assessing substantive and disciplinary knowledge using a combination of formative and summative assessment. It is not appropriate to assess personal knowledge formally. More detailed information about assessment can be found in Part 3 on page 58.

STEP 4
Pedagogy and practice – selecting activities and tasks

Once teachers have selected the content of the RE enquiry and are clear about what and how they will assess, they should select the specific activities and tasks that will engage the pupils in their class. Classroom practice and pedagogy should reflect the religion and worldviews approach adopted by this syllabus. Teachers should draw on a range of high quality resources and materials.

Church of England schools

The building blocks have been designed to enable teachers to fulfil the statutory requirements for RE and meet the expectations of the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education. Subject leaders and teachers in Church of England schools should use the resources and materials recommended by the Church of England to help deliver some of the content of this syllabus. Where necessary, resources should be adapted so that they meet the expectations of the religion and worldviews approach outlined in this syllabus.

The following overview shows how an enquiry might reflect the syllabus expectations. This overview is designed to support non-specialist teachers and is intended as guidance only.



KS3 OVERVIEW

Why is the idea of salvation so important to Christians?

LESSON 1

Creation: engage with the concept of a creative, relational God

- How, according to Genesis was the world made?
- How do people relate to God and the world they live in?
- What is the impact of sin?

Opportunity to reflect on their own place and responsibility for this world.

LESSON 2

Noah: enquire into the idea of salvation through a covenant relationship

- Why did God save Noah and his family?
- What is meant by 'covenant'?
- Why did God make a 'covenant'?

Opportunity to deepen ideas about cause and effect of our choices.

LESSON 3

Abraham: explore God's salvation plan through a different covenant relationship

- What was the covenant God made with Abraham?
- How does it compare with Noah's?
- Is a promise kept if it is fulfilled but not in your lifetime?

Opportunity to develop independent writing through analysing an assessment 'explain' model answer.

LESSON 4

Moses: explore the significance of God rescuing the Israelites from slavery in Egypt.

- How do the plagues upon Egypt and the Exodus link with God's salvation plan?

Opportunity to develop independent writing through the use of teacher modelling.

LESSON 5

Israel: explore the extension of the salvation plan to a people

- What are the Ten Commandments?
- Why did God give them to the Israelites?
- Why is the covenant important?
- How relevant are the Ten Commandments today?

Opportunity to reflect on how this covenant gives a chance to live in a 'Garden of Eden' way.

LESSON 6

David: express understanding of a Messiah being part of God's salvation plan

- What is the covenant that God makes with David?
- How is it similar / different from previous covenants?
- Why are these covenants so important to Christians?

Opportunity to reflect on personal knowledge and demonstrate ability to explain their thinking.

LESSON 7

Isaiah: explore the nature of this Messiah

- What is a Messiah?
- What is the Messiah going to be like?
- How might this be relevant to God's salvation plan?

Opportunity for pupils to creatively demonstrate understanding and make links with previous learning in the unit.

LESSON 8

Jesus – the Messiah: express how Christians believe he is the Messiah

- What were the promises made to Adam and Eve, Abraham, Israel, David, and Isaiah?
- How do Christians see Jesus as these promises kept?
- How does Jesus' death and resurrection link with 'Messiah' and the idea of salvation?

Opportunity for pupils to again creatively demonstrate understanding and reflect on if Jesus is the Messiah.

LESSON 9

Jesus – God and man: explore the importance of Jesus being both fully God and fully human

- How does Jesus show both his humanity and divinity?
- How does this link with year 7 learning on the Trinity?
- Why do you think this idea is so important to Christians?

Opportunity for pupils to reflect on their own thinking and reasoning about Jesus' nature through debate.

LESSON 10

Creation Restored (Eschatology): explore 'end times' and Jesus' role in this

- What do the guided reading Bible texts teach us about eschatology?
- How does it link with creation in Genesis and God's salvation plan.

Opportunity for summative assessment: recall, explain and evaluate key ideas.



2.8 **Requirements for KS4**

During KS4 pupils should receive 30 hours per year RE.

Short course or a non-examined course require a minimum of 1 hour per week.

Full course GCSE requires equal time to other humanities GCSE subjects.

It is recommended that students follow a syllabus towards an accredited course such as GCSE Religious Studies either through a full or short course of study. The timetable should accommodate this. The syllabus must focus on the study of religion, philosophy and ethics. While there is no legal requirement that students must undertake RE GCSE examinations, students deserve the opportunity to have their learning accredited which increases the value of a statutory subject. Accreditation also raises standards and increases progress as it motivates students. Schools should plan for continuity of provision of RE throughout the key stage so that the curriculum is progressive and challenging.

Two religions are required to be studied at KS4, one being Christianity. The second choice of religion should reflect the learning needs of students and draw upon the demographic data of the local area to make an informed decision. The content of the curriculum should be stimulating and expose students to challenging ultimate questions which provide the opportunity to deepen their own personal beliefs. The content of the curriculum should promote social cohesion and spiritual, moral and cultural development. Consequently, this endorses the British Values of respect, individual liberty and tolerance of different religious and cultural beliefs. Students should embrace the British Values through their learning of RE as an intrinsic outcome of the attainment targets through their learning about and their learning from religion.

A non-examinations RE syllabus should focus on developing students' understanding of diverse religions and worldviews, promote tolerance and mutual understanding and foster critical thinking skills. It should include exploring core beliefs, practices, and ethical frameworks of various religions, as well as non-religious worldviews like Humanism. The syllabus should also encourage reflection of personal beliefs and values, and how these relate to living in a diverse society.

A non-examined RE curriculum should:

- involve the study of core beliefs, teachings, practices, and expressions of various religions and worldviews
- explore questions of meaning, purpose, truth, ethics, and morality, considering how different traditions and individuals address these issues
- examine the diversity of religions and beliefs within society, fostering understanding and respect for different perspectives and promoting positive relationships within the school and wider community
- explore the historical and contemporary influence of religions and beliefs on individuals, communities, and global issues
- provide opportunities for students to reflect on their own beliefs, values, and experiences, fostering self-awareness and spiritual growth.

The following overview shows how an enquiry might reflect the syllabus expectations. This exemplar is designed to support non specialist teachers and is intended as guidance only.

KS4 OVERVIEW

How are concepts of life and death relevant to both theists and atheists?

LESSON 1

Origins of life: explore a variety of ideas as to how life came to be

- How might a creationist consider this question?
- How does it compare with a non-literalist approach?

Opportunity to examine multiple approaches to the same idea.

LESSON 2

Is life designed? Examine a variety of scientific and philosophical responses to this question

- What does Dawkins conclude?
- What is Paley's argument?
- What is intelligent design?

Opportunity to assess the effectiveness of each argument. Assess understanding through writing a 'Describe' exam question.

LESSON 3

Science and God: express the extent to which scientific and religious views on the origins of life are compatible

- Is it possible to be a religious scientist?
- How credible is a creationist view in the modern world?
- Why might science not have all the answers?

Opportunity to examine students' own thinking and the basis for it. Answer an exam question based upon the type needing the most improving.

LESSON 4

Stewardship: explore Islamic and Christian ideas relating to this concept

- What is stewardship?
- How do Islam and Christianity link it with the idea of life on earth?
- Is stewardship relevant to those of no faith?

Opportunity to sort arguments for and against people of faith doing more to care for this world.

LESSON 5

Sanctity of life: examine the extent to which life is 'special'

- What does the concept mean?
- Is it only relevant to those of faith?
- What is the significance of this concept?
- How is Singer's ideas on speciesism relevant?
- How does this link with other areas of the course?

Opportunity to reflect on their own knowledge and to audit their learning so far.

LESSON 6

Abortion: express views on the morality of the issue

- When does life begin? Can abortion ever be justified?
- To what extent is this a societal issue rather than simply a personal issue?

Opportunity to debate and develop independent writing through teacher modelling answer to evaluate exam question.

LESSON 7

Euthanasia: express views on the morality of the issue

- When does life come to an end?
- Can euthanasia ever be justified?
- Should the law change?

Opportunity for debate to inform the answer of an evaluation exam question.

LESSON 8

Afterlife: explore a variety of views on life after death

- What is a traditional Christian view on life after death?
- How does this compare with a contemporary view?
- How does this teaching link with other areas of the course?

Opportunity for students to reflect on their own views and the basis for them. Students make links with previous learning.

LESSON 9

Funerals: explore the variety of ways belief impacts on practice

- Who is a funeral for the deceased or their friends and family?
- How do Islamic and Christian beliefs impact how funerals are conducted?
- How do Humanist funerals reflect their beliefs?

Opportunity for summative assessment: recall, explain and evaluate key ideas.

2.9 **Requirements for KS5**

At KS5, all students are entitled under UK law to a minimum of 20 hours of RE provision, regardless of the other subjects they study. This statutory requirement ensures that every learner continues to engage critically with religion, belief, and worldviews. The content of KS5 RE should be shaped by theological, ethical and philosophical strands, enabling students to explore ultimate questions, moral reasoning, and the intellectual traditions that underpin religious and non-religious worldviews. Through this provision, students should develop a wide range of transferable skills, including critical analysis, argumentation, textual interpretation, evaluation of contrasting perspectives, and the ability to communicate complex ideas with clarity and coherence.

Alongside the statutory entitlement, students should also be offered the opportunity to study a single, coherent course that leads to an accredited qualification, such as A Level Religious Studies or an equivalent award. This option provides academic stretch for those who wish to pursue the subject in greater depth and ensures that RE at KS5 can contribute meaningfully to progression into higher education and future career pathways. A qualification-bearing course enables students to build substantive knowledge, refine higher-order thinking skills, and engage with a structured programme that is externally assessed and nationally recognised.

For example:

- Exploring arguments for and against the existence of God, the problem of evil, and the nature of religious experience.

Exemplar KS5 two-year cycle

Curriculum requirements for KS5

KS5 students are legally required a minimum of 20 hours of non-examined RE per year. This can be delivered in a variety of ways as weekly/fortnightly taught sessions or in this Illustrated case, conference based days and off-site visits delivered over three different days in the academic year.

Referenced websites for KS5

- lifecharity.org.uk
- churchofengland.org/resources/difference
- christiansinmedia.co.uk
- bills.parliament.uk/bills/3774
- spuc.org.uk
- msichoices.org.uk
- humanists.uk

Summer Term

Off-site visit with Year 12

For example: places of worship such as St. Paul's or Westminster Abbey, relevant gallery exhibitions such as at the Tate Modern or Outernet (where the relationship between values, art and technology are explored), inclusive/liberal places of worship to look at faith and LGBTQ+

Autumn Term

Conference Day 1

For example: Resolving Conflict: series of workshops, presentations and debate, based upon Church of England's 'The Difference' course or Euthanasia Bill – should it be made law? Invite your local MP to contribute to the day.

Spring Term

Conference Day 2

For example: is the Texan abortion law ethical? Series of workshops, presentations and debate with invited guest speaker(s) as part of the day from LIFE. SPUC, MSI Reproductive Choices and Humanists UK or Faith in Film: explore the ethics of including religious beliefs in film. Invite a member of 'Christians in Media' to contribute.

- Examining ethical frameworks from different religious and philosophical perspectives, such as natural law, utilitarianism, and deontology
- Analysing how different religions respond to issues such as poverty, environmentalism, social justice, and medical ethics
- Comparing and contrasting different religious traditions, focusing on their key beliefs, practices, and historical development
- Investigating the relationship between religion and various aspects of society, such as politics, culture, and art
- Exploring the nature and significance of religious experience and its role in shaping individual lives
- Encourage students to reflect on their own beliefs, values, and experiences, and to develop their personal sense of meaning and purpose in life
- Provide opportunities for students to understand and appreciate diverse beliefs and lifestyles, fostering respect
- Explore the connection between religion, belief, well-being, and mental health, considering how different traditions address emotional and spiritual needs.

2.10 **RE in special schools**

RE is a statutory part of the core curriculum for all pupils. The requirement for special schools is that they should follow the Locally Agreed Syllabus where practical.

The intent of the 2026 Agreed Syllabus is to ensure that RE is for all and is taught with the same purpose for everyone. Every pupil can achieve and benefit from RE. Good quality teaching and learning involves planning progression and tailoring the curriculum to cater for the needs of all pupils.

Pupils with SEND can show an increased awareness of people's feelings and are curious about other people's lives and an interest in religious and spiritual language. They benefit from sensory, first hand, experimental learning. Opportunities for these should be built into RE enquiries so that, for example, the sound of a call to prayer, the taste of matza or the smell of incense can be experienced by pupils. Through engaging with religious material and places pupils can give personal responses and engage in spiritual development. Their curiosity may lead to questions, insights and gestures which in turn develop their knowledge and understanding.

RE can help pupils to reflect and connect with issues in their own lives and show how others have faced life challenges and enable times of calm.

The curriculum may need to be adapted to meet pupils' individual needs whilst maintaining a breadth of study and ensuring learning is age appropriate and suitably challenging. This requires a careful analysis of the knowledge and skills being taught.

Adaptions may include:

- accessing the knowledge and skills from prior key stages until the most suitable one is found to meet the pupils' learning needs
- breaking knowledge into smaller progressive chunks or focusing on the core theme of a topic
- revisiting and building on previous learning to embed knowledge and understanding
- focusing on EHCP outcomes and determining how these can be taught through RE
- using schools' own assessment tools to celebrate small steps of progress.

Teachers should use the building blocks as the basis for planning and adapting RE enquiries but also need to recognise that children with special needs work more slowly and may need more time to discover the deeper meaning of each enquiry. The focus for each enquiry should be based on what is appropriate to be taught and experienced by pupils, not on simply differentiating mainstream concepts that may not hold any meaning for SEND pupils.

Before planning each RE enquiry teachers may find it helpful to consider the 'Five Keys into RE'.*

KEY 1
Find a connection to pupils' own lives and experiences so that pupils can engage with the big ideas of the enquiry. For example, work on the story of Diwali could begin with the idea that 'sometimes we go away, but it is good to be back home.'

KEY 2
Reflect on the core content of the enquiry and consider how to create a bridge between pupils' existing knowledge and experience and the specific substantive knowledge (Strands 1, 2 and 3) being taught so that the 'big idea' of the enquiry can be more easily understood. For example, a unit on the idea of 'Gospel' could be simplified to 'Jesus loved everyone, especially if they were poor or unhappy'. An enquiry focusing on Sikhism could focus on special teachers called gurus.

KEY 3
Consider the sensory elements of the religious and non-religious worldviews being studied so that you can build in authentic sensory experiences. For example, pupils could listen to a sacred song or piece of music with repetitive rhythms or could wrap around a tallit.

KEY 4
Consider the symbols and artefacts used by the religious and non-religious worldviews being studied to decide which are most accessible for pupils and which can provide the basis for imaginative and creative activities and responses. Pupils could hold artefacts such as a brass onkar or, if learning about the kara, could travel around a hoop to help them understand the symbolism of the kara.

KEY 5
Consider the 'values' associated with the religious and non-religious worldviews being studied so that pupils can think about these in relation to their own lives and experiences. For example, pupils could think about the value of patience when engaging with Jataka stories in an enquiry on Buddha dharma.

* Anne Krisman **reonline.org.uk**

2.11 **SEND**

The following gives examples of how teachers might adapt RE enquiries to support learners with SEND.

BUILDING BLOCK 1
Substantive knowledge

Strand 1: Lived reality – pupils should be given the opportunity to learn about the lived reality of religious and non-religious worldviews; how people express their beliefs and faith as individuals, communities, societies and the cultural traditions which are an expression of collective belief. The core knowledge or 'sticky knowledge' should be simplified so that the big ideas of the unit are made easier to understand. When pupils are learning about the lived reality of religious and non-religious traditions teachers should make sure they make clear connections to pupils' own lives and experiences. For example, pupils could:

- talk about a religious festival or celebration such as Christmas, Easter, Rosh Hashanah, Ramadan, Diwali or Holi, and discuss their likes and dislikes, talk about which parts of the celebrations they can relate to and compare and contrast different celebrations and festivals
- visit a place of worship to explore its sensory qualities and respond creatively to the architecture, features, symbolism or sacred art and imagery
- talk about past events from their own life experiences such as special family times, for example, baptism, bar mitzvah, Hajj, pilgrimage
- engage with different forms of religious and non-religious expression such as artwork, music, dance, clothes or food
- share their ideas about guidance for living such as The Ten Commandments, the Five Pillars of Islam, good and bad actions or Humanist perspectives.

Strand 2: Foundational beliefs, concepts and ideas – pupils should have the opportunity to learn about and understand the main beliefs/ concepts and teaching of the religion and worldviews studied. For example, pupils could:

- talk about 'good news' (Gospel) and share examples of when they have heard or shared good news; explore stories about Jesus and think about whether he was good news for other people
- add physical actions to a multi- sensory telling of a 'helping hands' story to help pupils understand the concept of dharma.

Strand 3: Impact and significance – pupils should be given the opportunity to reflect on the importance of religious and non-religious worldviews as they link to their own lives and experiences. For example, pupils could:

- think about and discuss questions such as "is it correct to punish people if they did not mean to do something wrong in class". What do their friends and other people in their class think?

BUILDING BLOCK 2
Disciplinary knowledge

Pupils should be given the opportunity to learn about how different people explore religious and non-religious worldviews by focusing on 'Living' (Social Science), 'Believing' (Theology) and 'Thinking' (Philosophy). For example, pupils could:

- meet different people to find out about how they study religions and worldviews; share their own ideas about where to answer RE questions
- listen to and begin to unpick the meaning of religious stories such as Moses and the Exodus, Creation, Noah, Joseph, Rama and Sita, Muhammad
- ask 'how' and 'why' questions about beliefs and ideas using artefacts, pictures and books.

BUILDING BLOCK 3
Personal knowledge and spirituality

Pupils should be given the opportunity to reflect on their personal worldview in light of their RE learning and to explore the subject matter in ways that enable them to think more deeply about themselves, others, the world around them and a divine being or God. For example, pupils could:

- consider and share their experiences of their own families' beliefs and values to build connections and discover similarities and differences
- talk about "big questions" that are important to them
- use their senses to engage with imagery and artefacts and respond imaginatively and creatively.

BUILDING BLOCK 4
Assessment

SEND pupils should be given regular opportunities to **recall** the core substantive and disciplinary knowledge they have been taught, **reflect** on the impact and significance of the religious and non-religious worldviews they have studied and **respond** to the RE subject matter in ways which allow them to demonstrate their own feelings, ideas, beliefs and values. Teachers will need to think carefully about the types and timings of the formative and summative assessments they build into their RE enquiries.

3 Assessment

3.1 School based assessment

School based assessment is an essential part of monitoring pupil progress and is the sole means of statutory assessment throughout KS 1, 2 and 3. Assessment needs to be challenging, rigorous, manageable and fit for purpose.

Assessment should enable teachers in KS 1, 2 and 3 to make informed judgements about the knowledge and skills pupils have acquired and which will enable them to successfully undertake examinations at KS4 and KS5 in line with the relevant examination board.

For non-examination RE at KS4 and KS5, assessment should focus on evaluating students' understanding of religion and worldviews, their ability to apply knowledge to real-world situations and their capacity for critical thinking and personal reflection. Assessment should incorporate a range of tasks such as essays, presentations, debates, and reflective journals, ensuring a balance between substantive, disciplinary and personal knowledge.

It is important to note that not all aspects of RE can be assessed. For example, pupils may express personal views and ideas that, although integral to teaching and learning would not be appropriate for formal assessment.

Schools are required to keep records on RE for all pupils unless they have been withdrawn by their parents. They must update these records at least once a year. Decisions about how to mark work and record progress are subject to individual school policy.

3.2 Principles for developing an effective assessment model

This syllabus does not include generic statements or high level outcomes for schools to use when making judgements about pupil progress in RE. 'Deep and Meaningful? The RE report' published by Ofsted in April 2024 found that high level outcomes based on generic end of year or key stage statements did not provide an effective framework for checking how pupils' knowledge had grown and deepened over time. Assessment that uses 'scales', 'ladders' or 'levels' of generic skills are not considered to be valid models to assess the effectiveness of a school's RE curriculum or pupil progress. The report is clear that good assessment in RE 'relates assessment expectations precisely to the RE curriculum.' ('Deep and Meaningful? The RE subject report' April 2024).

The Agreed Syllabus expectations for assessing RE are based on a set of principles which schools should use as the basis of their own assessment framework.

Assessment principles

- Schools should use this syllabus as the basis for developing an RE curriculum which sets out specifically and precisely what it means to 'get better at RE' so that progress can be measured against the curriculum that has been taught.
- The framework for assessment should be determined by the content of the curriculum.
- Teachers should be clear about the purpose of assessment: what they are assessing, why

they are assessing and what they will do with the outcomes of their assessment.

- The assessment model for RE should not be excessive.
- Teachers should be clear about different ways of assessing so that different types of assessment are used correctly and for the correct purpose. For example, formative assessment is an effective way of gaining 'in the moment' feedback which can be used by teachers to address pupil misconceptions and gaps in knowledge and inform subsequent planning but should not be used as the basis for accountability.
- Assessment in RE should include assessing substantive knowledge and disciplinary knowledge. Personal knowledge, according to the Ofsted report, may be an aspect of RE that should not be assessed formally due to its personal nature.
- A school's assessment model should include formative and summative assessment. Different types of assessment and a range of assessment tasks should be used to assess substantive and disciplinary knowledge.
- When planning assessment tasks teachers will need to be sensitive to the nature of the subject.
- Teachers should build in regular opportunities to assess to build up a complete picture of pupil progress over time.
- If schools choose to timetable formal summative assessments at key end points such as end of year, end of phase or end of key stage, the assessment activities must match precisely the content that has been taught up to that point in time. Assessments should include both core content (substantive knowledge) so that teachers can make accurate judgements about the extent and depth of pupils' knowledge and the extent to which pupils can handle RE enquiries (disciplinary knowledge) and apply specialist disciplinary knowledge and skills.



Assessing substantive knowledge

Teachers must ensure they can make accurate judgements about the extent and depth of pupils' knowledge about religions and belief systems e.g. the beliefs, texts, practices and forms of expression of different religious and non-religious worldviews as set out in their curriculum.

Assessing disciplinary knowledge

Teachers should assess pupils' knowledge and understanding of how to study RE subject matter. For example, pupils should be able to demonstrate knowledge of how a theologian, social scientist or philosopher would approach an RE enquiry. Pupils should also be able to apply the specialist skills associated with these disciplines correctly when undertaking an RE enquiry.

Assessing personal knowledge

Teachers should be able to make accurate judgements about how pupils relate what they have learnt to their own personal worldview and their capacity to engage meaningfully and respectfully with the content they have been taught. The Ofsted subject report into RE (April 2024) acknowledges that personal knowledge is highly personal and might be an aspect of RE that should be unencumbered by formal assessment.

3.3 **Syllabus requirements**

Each school should:

- establish a curriculum which is accurate, challenging, enriching and which demonstrates clear progression of learning
- establish a precise and effective system for assessing the extent and depth of pupils' substantive, disciplinary and personal knowledge as set out in their curriculum
- plan regular formative and summative assessments which enable teachers to make informed judgements about pupil progress over time and the effectiveness of their curriculum
- record pupil progress against clear end points at least once a year
- provide pupils with regular feedback on their progress in RE so that they know what they do well and what they need to do next.

In particular, teachers should plan regular assessment opportunities which enable them to make accurate judgements about:

- pupils' **recall** of subject matter so they can demonstrate increasing depth and breadth of substantive and disciplinary knowledge over time
- the extent to which pupils can **reflect** on the significance and impact of what they have learnt, connecting and evaluating core knowledge and demonstrating critical thinking skills
- the extent to which pupils can **respond** to the subject matter with insight and discernment and which enables them to demonstrate imagination and creativity.

How schools meet these requirements is left to the discretion of school leaders. When making judgements about the extent to which pupils are making progress in RE teachers should ensure they plan regular opportunities for pupils to recall, reflect on and respond to the RE subject matter they have been taught. The assessment activities should enable teachers to make informed judgements about the extent to which pupils are increasingly knowledgeable (**recall**); can think critically and draw conclusions about what they have learnt (**reflect**); and have gained deeper understanding and insight about themselves, other people and the world around them (**respond**) by engaging with big ideas, beliefs, questions of ultimate truth and truthful living.

The following are examples of recall, reflect and respond assessment tasks.

Building Block 4: Assessment

The RE curriculum should incorporate regular opportunities for pupils to recall substantive knowledge, demonstrate disciplinary knowledge, reflect on the impact and significance of what they have learnt and respond thoughtfully, imaginatively and creatively to RE subject matter.

Recall

Activities which enable pupils to demonstrate they remember the core substantive and disciplinary knowledge they have been taught in a lesson, enquiry, term, year or key stage. Recall and retrieval activities often involve quick low stakes testing of knowledge and should be used regularly. Interleaving recall and retrieval activities helps strengthen long term learning.

Examples

- Define tier 3 vocabulary
- Describe core beliefs or code of living
- Retell stories
- Recall key features of worship rituals
- Design a questionnaire or survey
- Outline a philosophical proposition

Throughout an enquiry teachers should plan regular opportunities for pupils to recall, reflect and respond to the core content. The nature of the activities should be determined by the subject matter and the age of pupils.

Reflect

Activities which require pupils to think critically about what they have learnt enable them to make connections across RE enquiries and to wider learning. Activities generally require pupils to analyse, explain, interpret and reason and draw conclusions about the impact and significance of the beliefs, ideas and ways of living they have encountered. These types of assessment activities should be used regularly as formative summative assessment.

Examples

- Suggest alternative meaning to a story
- Consider different interpretations of a text
- Evaluate the significance of a sacred text for different people
- Analyse and interpret data
- Analyse and draw comparisons about the diversity which exists within a particular tradition
- Draw conclusions about the significance of the Hajj for the Muslim community for example
- Construct a reasoned philosophical argument

Respond

The nature of RE lends itself to opportunties for pupils to respond creatively and imaginatively. These types of activities enable pupils to share their ideas and feelings about the beliefs, ideas and ways of living they have encountered and connect more deeply with themselves, others, the world and the transcendent. Activities are unlikely to be used as formal assessments but over time help teachers build a more complete picture about the extent to which pupils are engaging with the big ideas they have encountered.

Examples

- Talk about the difference belonging to a particular group might make
- Create a painting or sculpture to reflect their understanding of the concept of 'salvation' for example
- Discuss their feelings about a character in a story
- Share ideas and feelings about stewardship for example
- Write a poem in response to a sacred painting, piece of music, or visit
- Ask challenging questions about the orthodoxy of an ethical or moral dilemma
- Keep a reflective journal



'Recall' assessment activities

- low-stakes retrieval quizzes or recall activities linked to knowledge organisers to assess students' grasp of key concepts
- short answer written tasks to assess depth and accuracy of factual and conceptual knowledge, for example:
  - dual coding tasks which encourage pupils to represent religious knowledge visually and verbally, showing connections between ideas.
  - framing questions such as "How do theologians interpret the resurrection story?" or 'How might a social scientist explore the significance of the Passover for the Jewish community?' to encourage recall of specialist disciplinary knowledge and methods.

Reflect' assessment activities

- concept maps or timelines to assess how well students understand the development and structure of religious ideas over time
- comparative analysis tasks which encourage the evaluation of religious claims using different disciplines (for example, philosophical reasoning compared to anthropological context)
- annotated source analysis: students analyse religious texts or artefacts using critical methods
- structured debates or Socratic seminars which allow assessment of reasoning, interpretation, and use of disciplinary methods
- concept response tasks which ask students how learning about a belief system might affect someone's life, encouraging empathy and critical self-awareness
- extended written tasks where pupils are required to analyse, evaluate and draw conclusions.

'Respond' assessment activities

- dialogic teaching and discussion: structured class discussions enable teachers to make judgements about pupils' abilities to express and listen to diverse views
- reflective writing and journals which assess pupils' ability to reflect on how learning impacts their own values and ideas. These should respect boundaries
- learning logs or exit tickets which ask pupils to share what they found challenging, surprising, or thought-provoking
- creative responses such as paintings, sculpture, narrative or poetry to core content enabling pupils to share their personal insight and ideas.

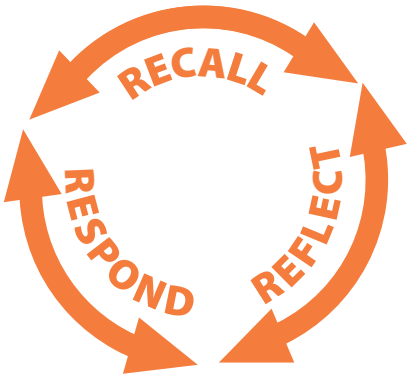
3.4 Exemplars

The following exemplars show how opportunities for recall, reflect and respond activities can be woven into an enquiry. The activities can be used as formative assessments or adapted as summative assessments. These exemplars are designed to support non specialist teachers and are intended as guidance only.

EYFS creation exemplar

- Tell some or all of the story of creation
- Draw a key part of the story of creation.
- List things that are amazing in the world.
- Say what Christians believe about who made the world.
- Think of two things a Christian does to look after the world.

- Give your own ideas in response to the story of creation.
- Make a creation treasure box
- Talk about what you find interesting about the creation story.
- What do you find amazing about the story of creation?
- Draw a picture or talk about something that you like about the world.
- Share things your family have tried to do to look after the world.
- Give an example of when you have cared for nature.



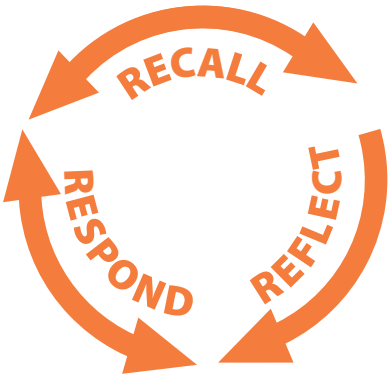
- Explain why creation is important to Christians.
- Look at pictures of people caring for creation and explain what is happening.
- Look at an object that shows care for the environment and explain why it's important, for example, a recycling bin or gardening gloves.
- What does the story of creation encourage people to do?
- Why do you think this person is doing this? (Look at a picture of someone caring for the world)

KS1 exemplar

Overview of enquiry – Why is Eid a big day for Muslim children?
Pupils will:

- engage with the idea of celebrating important days/ family celebrations; Omar (Muslim Persona Doll)
- enquire into fasting (sawm) and Ramadan
- explore the festival of Eid-ul-Fitr – what happens, different Eid traditions and significance of Eid for Muslim children
- evaluate core learning about Eid
- express ideas about the celebration of Eid and showing generosity and gratitude

- Share previous learning about Islam
- Story board key events of Eid-ul-Fitr
- Identify/name images of Eid



- Talk about the significance of family celebrations
- Make and share Eid sweet treats
- Share own examples of acts of generosity and gratitude
- Make an Eid Mubarak banner or card

- Sort images of different Eid traditions explain why Omar enjoys Eid-ul-Fitr
- Give 3 reasons why celebrating Eid-ul-Fitr is important for Muslim families

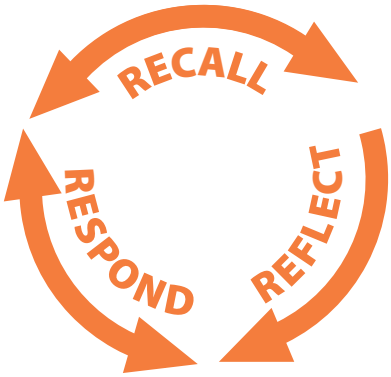
KS2 exemplar

Overview of enquiry – How does dharma influence a Hindu way of life?
Pupils will:

- engage with the idea of duty and the Hindu concept of dharma
- enquire into Hinduism in Britain
- explore the celebration of Raksha Bandhan; how Hindus in Britain show their ashrama dharma and how the concept of dharma is reflected in the story of Rama and Sita
- evaluate core learning
- express insight and ideas about 'dharma' and its value beyond the Hindu community

- Complete a mind map to show what you already know about the Hindu community and the idea of Hindu dharma
- Sequence the key moments in the story of Rama and Sita
- List the ways Hindu children demonstrate duties and responsibilities in the festival of Raksha Bandhan
- Complete the definitions table
- Complete a solo taxonomy activity using the keywords on your knowledge organiser

- Create an image /model which reflects a key moment in the story of Rama and Sita to demonstrate the idea of dharma and explain your choice
- Design a symbol which best represents for you the concept of 'dharma"
- Share your own ideas about the extent to which the concept of dharma might inspire you when making choices in life



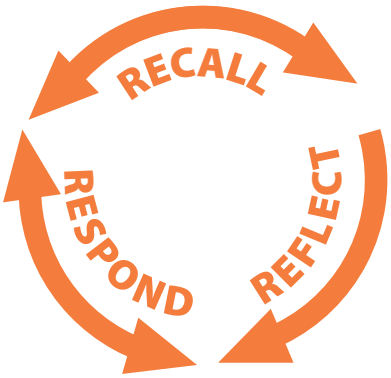
- Complete a writing frame on the story of Rama and Sita and list 4 possible interpretations of the story
- Evaluate the significance of diwali for the Hindu community
- Write a short paragraph to explain why a murti of Rama and Sita might be a good gift for a Hindu bride and groom
- Write your answer to our enquiry question: 'What is dharma and why is it so important for many Hindus?'

KS2 exemplar

Should happiness be our goal in life? What do different people say?
Pupils will:

- engage with the idea of happiness and enquire into Humanism
- enquire into the concept of happiness
- explore Humanist beliefs about happiness; religious perspectives on happiness and how different ideas about happiness shape how people live
- evaluate core learning
- express understanding and ideas about the concept of happiness and living well

- Draw the 'Happy Human' symbol and label key facts
- Complete an outline of Aristotle and label his key philosophical ideas
- Match key concepts to definitions for key Christian, Islamic, Jewish and Hindu beliefs/concepts about the purpose of life drawing on previous learning
- List four Humanist ideas about happiness/purpose of life
- Design 'social science' questions and list social science skills



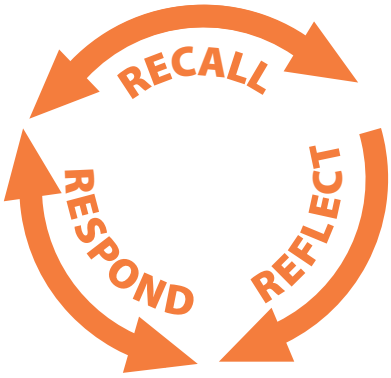
- Create a piece of artwork which represents your goals in life and write an accompanying 'exhibition' entry.
- Complete a personal journal entry recording your thoughts on how the enquiry has influenced your own ideas about happiness and the purpose of life

- Complete a double entry journal activity on Humanist text
- Complete a piece of extended writing to answer the question 'Should happiness be the goal of life?
- Construct a reasoned argument which draws on the Humanist and religious perspectives you have learnt about.

KS3 exemplar – Salvation History

- Quiz – recall comparison between Islam and Christianity. What stories and people do they share?
- www.customconnections.org Create a grid of 16 ideas from the unit so far to be connected into 4 different groups
- Fill in the gaps of previously studied Bible verses
- Rewrite sentences so they read accurately
- Complete a crossword or clue-based word search
- Create a speedy Mind map based on pictures used for each week's learning.

- Discuss whether God's punishment of Adam and Eve was fair.
- Use structure strips to support writing an assessment style question, for example, explain the importance of the covenants found in the Bible
- Create an advertisement seeking the person Isaiah is prophetically speaking about
- Create a rap, poem, poster or game that illustrates Jesus is the awaited Messiah.



- Guided reading
- Reflect (through spoken or written word) on the importance of a particular covenant, for example, Abraham
- Complete a multi-flow map showing causes and consequences of Noah's Flood and Covenant.
- Extract key points and reflect on relevant Bible Project videos, for example, The Covenants in the Bible Theme
- Reflect on different Bible passages, for example, the words of Isaiah.

4 Glossary of terms used in the Agreed Syllabus

- **Religion and worldviews approach**
  A religion and worldviews approach refers to a way of exploring RE subject matter which shapes both the content and ways of engaging with it. A religion and worldviews approach includes the examination of the relationship of worldviews to religion. In contrast to a traditional world religions paradigm which tended to focus on the 'big 6' established religions presented as distinct, discrete and changing. A religion and worldviews approach allows for a wider range of religious and non-religious worldviews to be explored and acknowledges the diversity of belief and practice that exists both within and across different worldviews. The approach is one that also acknowledges the place of the individual within organised worldviews and how individual perspectives might differ from orthodox teachings or practices. The aim of a religion and worldviews approach is to enable pupils to have a good understanding of how religious and non-religious worldviews work in life, give them the scholarly skills to engage meaningfully with the worldviews they encounter, enable them to become 'wise' interpreters' and recognise how their personal worldview shapes and is shaped by these encounters. See REC Handbook for more detailed information (formally titled Developing a Religion and Worldviews Approach in Religious Education in England) is a landmark resource published by the Religious Education Council of England and Wales in May 2024.
- **Worldview**
  Following the Religious Education Council's lead this syllabus defines worldview as 'a more or less coherent and established system with certain (written and unwritten) sources, traditions, values, rituals, ideals or dogmas (from van der Kooij et al, 2013). Organised or institutional worldviews include both religious and non-religious worldviews. Like the term 'religion' the term 'worldview' is a contested one.
- **Humanism**
  Is a non-religious worldview based on reason, compassion and human potential. Humanists find purpose in this life without reference to the supernatural. Humanists use science and critical thinking to solve problems and build a just society. See Humanist UK website for more detailed information.

Different types of knowledge

- **Substantive knowledge**
  Key facts and information that pupils are expected to learn and remember. Sometimes referred to as core knowledge or 'sticky' knowledge.
- **Disciplinary knowledge**
  The specialist knowledge, skills and methodologies that are associated with particular academic disciplines and used by academics to extend and deepen a particular area of study. In the study of RE we can think of disciplinary knowledge as the specialist knowledge and skills pupils need to acquire to become 'RE experts'. Many different disciplines can be used to explore RE subject matter but in this syllabus we focus on

the disciplines of theology, social sciences and philosophy. The way we define these disciplines is contextualised for a school setting. For more detailed information on disciplinary knowledge as contextualised for a school setting see 'What does it mean to 'get better' at the ways of knowing in RE?' by Gillian Georgiou and Olivia Seymour.

- **Theology 'BELIEVING'**
  Theology is the study of the things people believe. This includes what people believe, where these beliefs come from, how they change over time and how they connect with each other into an overarching worldview. Theologians study a variety of sources of authority and use skills of textual interpretation (hermeneutics).
- **Social science 'LIVING'**
  The human/social sciences encompass a range of academic disciplines (such as sociology, history and geography) to explore the ways in which people live their lives. Academics are interested in how people live, the ways in which they live and how this is shaped by context. Key methods used by social scientists include carrying out surveys, interviews, ethnography and data analysis.
- **Philosophy 'THINKING'**
  Philosophy is interested in what humans know and how they know it in order to understand and make sense of the world. Philosophers ask questions about how people think and reason about the world around them and how people can know what is real or true. Key methods that philosophers apply are thought experiment, debating, critical thinking and processes of reasoning.
- **Personal knowledge**
  Focuses on pupils' awareness of their own presuppositions, values and experiences about the religious and non-religious worldviews they encounter (REC Handbook).



- **Spiritual flourishing**
  Can be understood as nurturing a person's holistic development which encompasses a sense of awe and wonder, self-awareness, empathy, imagination and creativity through opportunities to connect more deeply to the transcendent (and for some to the divine/God), the world, other people and themselves.
- **Positionality**
  Self-awareness of a personal viewpoint or perspective on the world which contributes to an overarching personal worldview.
- **Reflection**
  Thinking deeply about the concepts and ideas that have been learned in RE and how these might be valued similarly or differently or not at all.
- **Reflexivity**
  Reflexivity as understood in the context of RE focuses on looking inward so that pupils (and teachers) critically examine their own beliefs, values, assumptions and cultural backgrounds in order to deepen their understanding of how these shape their own personal worldview.

Enquiry cycle

- **Engage**
  To interact thoughtfully with an idea or concept. This stage of the enquiry cycle is often used to introduce pupils to the key concepts and ideas of the unit of work and excite their curiosity.
- **Enquire**
  Ask thoughtful questions about the core concepts and keywords. This stage of the enquiry cycle is often used to introduce keywords and help pupils consolidate previous learning through the explicit connecting of knowledge.
- **Explore**
  Find out about and examine a topic in depth. This stage of the enquiry cycle is where most of the learning will take place as pupils explore different aspects of the worldviews they are studying.
- **Evaluate**
  Weigh up evidence and draw conclusions. This stage of the enquiry cycle is often used to review core substantive knowledge and provide opportunities for pupils to recall key facts and information as pupils reflect on the Key Enquiry Question (KEQ).
- **Express**
  Demonstrate understanding and insight about the core ideas and concepts which have been studied. This stage of the enquiry cycle is often used as an opportunity for pupils to share their own ideas and opinions about the core concepts they have studied.

Assessment

- **Recall**
  Retrieval of core knowledge.
- **Reflect**
  Critical thinking; reach conclusions about the impact and significance of religions and worldviews.
- **Respond**
  Demonstrate personal insight and discernment in response to the subject matter studied.
- **Formative assessment**
  Formative assessment is granular and provides 'in the moment' feedback for pupils. Formative assessment can be used as part of adaptive teaching that, for example, responds to pupils' misconceptions. It can also give teachers very clear feedback on the next steps for teaching RE content.
- **Summative assessment**
  Summative assessment checks whether pupils have learned portions of the curriculum at a particular moment in time. The portions of the curriculum that are assessed are cumulative, as pupils are taught increasingly more complex content over time and should include both substantive and disciplinary knowledge.
- **Interleaved retrieval activities**
  Activities which mix subject matter help the brain to switch between and connect core knowledge leading to more effective long-term retention of information. In RE interleaved retrieval activities enable pupils to recall core knowledge from different enquiries to consolidate understanding, for example, key concepts and ideas.

5 Acknowledgements and relgious education resources

Acknowledgements

Thanks to members of SACRE for their continued support and in particular to the working group who have contributed significantly to each of the Key Stage sections of the syllabus.

The overviews are adapted from RE enquiries currently used in many schools across West Sussex. They draw on the most widely available resources including:

- RE Today Publications such as the Inspiring RE series and 'Big Questions and Big Answers' Series and RE Today units of work
- NATRE resources
- Understanding Christianity (Church of England in partnership with RE Today/ Culham St Gabriel's/The Jerusalem Trust and Sir Halley Stewart Trust)
- The Emmanuel Project, Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich
- Big Ideas for Religious Education, Barbara Wintersgill
- Understanding Humanism Resources **understandinghumanism.org.uk**

We advise all schools to access and invest in a range of high quality resources and materials as the basis for planning RE enquiries.

The 5 Keys framework included in the Special Schools' section is based on 5 Keys Into RE (2013) Anne Krisman (Little Heath School) and can be viewed on the RE:Online website **reonline.org.uk/2013/02/01/keys-into-re-anne-krisman**

Thanks to SACRE members, West Sussex Schools and the Diocese of Chichester for the use of their photographs.

Professional organisations

- **NATRE (National Association of Teachers of Religious Education)** – provides national and local support for RE teachers and subject leaders. It serves as an initial point of contact for up to date information about RE.
- **REC (Religious Education Council of England and Wales)** – umbrella organisation bringing representatives from different religious and educations communities together to support RE

Other organisations

- **RE Today** – anational provider of RE-related teaching and learning materials and resources.
- **Church of England Dioceses** – many dioceses provide free to access teaching and learning materials via their websites

Useful websites

- **RE Online** – comprehensive website providing information about RE including support for subject knowledge, teaching and learning, information about pedagogical approaches and research.
- **RE Quest** – useful videos and resources for teaching and learning about Christianity.
- **Understanding Humanism** – website produced by the British Humanist Association providing teaching and learning materials.
- **BBC Bitesize** – information about religions and belief and online teaching and learning materials.

For information and resources about religious and non-religious worldviews, please contact the Clerk for West Sussex SACRE.

Notes

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