

The Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2015 - 2020

Contents

Forewords from Oxfordshire County Council and the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education

1 [Introduction “Challenging RE” The Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus for RE 2015 - 20](#)

1.1 [Legal requirements](#)

2 **The educational rationale for RE in the curriculum**

2.1 [The importance of RE](#)

2.2 [RE is both rigorously academic and deeply personal](#)

2.3 [RE and Personal Development](#)

3 [The basis for planning quality Religious Education](#)

3.1 [The aims of the Agreed Syllabus](#)

3.2 [The Learning Process for ‘Challenging RE’.](#)

3.3 [Concepts in RE](#)

3.4 [Conceptual Creativity](#)

3.5 [Inclusion and Special Educational Needs](#)

4 **What pupils will learn**

4.1 [Which religions to study](#)

4.2 [RE in the Early Years and Foundation Stage.](#)

4.3 [KS1 curriculum: Enquiring into experience and feelings](#)

4.4 [KS2 curriculum: Enquiring into experience and beliefs](#)

4.5 [KS3 curriculum: Enquiring into experience and ultimate questions](#)

4.6 [Key Stage 4 curriculum](#)

4.7 [RE in the Sixth Form](#)

5 [Progression and assessment](#)

5.1 [Assessment](#)

5.2 [Progression through the aims of the Agreed Syllabus](#)

5.3 [Using the learning process skills to support and plan progression](#)

6 **Appendices**

6.1 [What is the value of RE in 21st century schools?](#)

6.2 [Different approaches to learning and teaching in RE](#)

6.3 [Conceptual creativity](#)

6.4 [Guidance on how to structure pupils’ learning](#)

6.5 [Further guidance on progression and assessment](#)

6.6 [General guidance from the non-statutory framework 2004](#)

6.7 [Theme grids from 2007 Syllabus to assist planning](#)

Foreword

We live in challenging times and it is appropriate that our newly revised Agreed Syllabus for Oxfordshire should build on the last syllabus whilst adding an enquiry based approach to learning alongside structures for progression and challenge.

The Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) had to consider national changes and developments, both in RE and in education in general, alongside the views of local teachers. As a consequence, the ASC agreed on minimal changes so that schools may if they wish continue as before with no need to change content, whilst being free to plan learning in a more enquiring and learning-focused way. There is, however, less focus on content, allowing schools the freedom to plan a curriculum which is appropriate for their pupils yet still maintaining the integrity of RE as a discrete subject.

Children and young people need to be equipped to handle increasingly complex and important questions about meaning and identity and how we can live together in a multi-cultural and multi-faith/belief society. This Agreed Syllabus will be an important contribution to this process. We commend The Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus for RE 2015-20 to you all trusting it will facilitate the delivery of exciting and reflective RE for the benefit of the pupils in our county so that their learning enables them to develop as people and to take their place in society.

Our hope now is that this syllabus will be enjoyed throughout Oxfordshire schools and academies.



Jim Leivers
Director for Children, Education and Families

The Oxford Diocesan Board of Education values its partnership with Oxfordshire County Council in the promotion of high quality Religious Education for all pupils in all schools.

We warmly welcome the publication of this revised Agreed Syllabus for Oxfordshire, which takes account of developments in education and the greater freedoms schools have to plan their own curriculum for their pupils. We recognise that the syllabus encourages a broad and balanced approach, which will develop pupils' critical and philosophical thinking skills and their respect for people whose opinions and beliefs are different from their own. Going beyond the recommendation of this syllabus, the Diocesan Board of Education expects all secondary schools to provide opportunities for pupils to follow externally accredited courses in Religious Studies in Key Stage 4 and where appropriate in post 16 contexts.

This will be a helpful basis to Religious Education courses in Voluntary Aided Church of England schools and all those who have contributed to the production of this syllabus are to be congratulated.

Anne Davey
Director of Education, Diocese of Oxford

1. Introduction: The Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2015-20: “Challenging RE”

[Top](#)

The previous Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education was published in 2007 and took effect from 2008. Whilst there is a requirement to review the effectiveness of the syllabus every five years, SACRE agreed that it was wise to wait for the publication of the REC Review before any changes were to be made and so the Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) reviewed the Agreed Syllabus during 2013-14. In so doing the ASC listened to the views and suggestions of teachers, considered the most recent developments nationally, and took into account the options available given the local situation at the time.

In the light of all this the ASC agreed that:

- a) the new Agreed Syllabus promote enquiry and progression in line with recent developments and the desire of teachers to focus on planning, enquiry and progression;
- b) there would be real continuity between the previous Agreed Syllabus and the new one to ensure ease of transition, and that the Agreed Syllabus for 2007 would become the first layer of support material for selecting content so that change in what is taught can be minimal;
- c) there would be less prescription of content, to reflect more fully the freedoms of schools to plan an appropriate curriculum for their pupils, whilst at the same time keeping the integrity of RE as an important subject in its own right;
- d) we would promote enquiry and progression in line with recent developments and the desire of teachers to focus on planning, enquiry and progression by drawing on the structure of the Buckinghamshire Agreed Syllabus ‘Challenging RE’;
- e) the statutory content will be set out in Key Stage frameworks in the form of key questions, except for KS4 and Post-16;
- f) the structure, particularly for planning and progression, would be brought together coherently;
- g) the new Agreed Syllabus would provide only what is statutory with no set out units and that support materials would be produced separately, building from the existing materials in the 2007 syllabus;
- h) schools could adopt flexible ways to plan and structure their RE whilst ensuring that they provided a coherent and meaningful experience for their pupils.

The current Government has stressed that Religious Education remains part of the statutory Basic Curriculum, alongside the National Curriculum, and that it expects all pupils to receive RE as part of the provision in every school or academy. It is an entitlement of all registered pupils in a maintained school, including those in Reception and Post-16, unless they are withdrawn by their parents. The Oxfordshire ASC, together with the Standing Advisory Council on RE (SACRE), hopes that this Agreed Syllabus will encourage and enable all schools in Oxfordshire, whatever their designation, to provide coherent, quality and challenging RE for all their pupils, not just because by law they have to, but because Head Teachers, governors and teachers see the value of good RE for their pupils, school and communities.

1.1 Legal requirements

The legal requirements concerning the provision of Religious Education and an Agreed Syllabus flow, principally, from the Education Act 1996 (S. 375), the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (SS. 69 and 71 and Schedule 19) and the Education Act 2002 (S. 80).

1. Religious Education **must** be provided for all registered pupils in full time education except those withdrawn at their parents’ request.

This includes pupils in:

- (i) reception classes but not those in nursery classes
 - (ii) years 12 and 13 (but not those in Sixth Form Colleges)
 - (iii) Special Schools, where provision for Religious Education should be delivered as far as is practicable.
 - (iv) Sixth Form Colleges who may wish to receive Religious Education.
 - (v) Community Schools, Foundation Schools and Voluntary Controlled Schools. Religious Education must be taught in accordance with an Agreed Syllabus.
 - (vi) Foundation and Voluntary Controlled Schools with a religious foundation. Parents may request Religious Education in accordance with the school's Trust Deed, or in accordance with the beliefs or denomination specified in the designation of the school.
 - (vii) Voluntary Aided schools with a religious character. Religious education is taught in accordance with the Trust Deed, or with the beliefs or denomination specified in the designation of the school, to reflect the religious character of the foundation. The Governing Body of a Voluntary Aided school has the responsibility to choose whether or not to adopt the locally Agreed Syllabus.
 - (viii) Academies which are bound by their funding agreement to provide for RE in accordance with the requirements of new Agreed Syllabuses as set out in the 1988 Education Reform Act (see below).
2. A locally Agreed Syllabus (and an academy-developed syllabus) must reflect the fact that 'the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'.
 3. In schools where an Agreed Syllabus applies, Religious Education must be non-denominational. Teaching about denominational differences is permitted.
 4. In Foundation, Community Maintained and Voluntary Controlled schools, the Head Teacher, along with the Governing Body and the Local Authority, is responsible for the provision of Religious Education.

Whilst, as with other subjects, there is no minimum time allocation for RE, it is expected that schools will provide sufficient time, in planning their whole school curriculum, to achieve the aims of the Agreed Syllabus and ensure their pupils have a coherent and meaningful experience of RE. In line with nationally accepted practice, the ASC/SACRE recommends a minimum of 5% of curriculum time as an aggregate over each Key Stage in order for this expectation to be met.

This could be planned

- as a separate subject which might be provided through intensive periods of learning (e.g. an afternoon a week) for half a term and then no RE for the other half of the term; or
- in a mixed curriculum model, involving RE as part of an integrated curriculum in which it is sometimes a lead subject and other times a support subject; or
- as a vehicle for intensive literacy development; or
- occasionally through 'drop-down days' focusing on whole-curriculum concepts such as community, identity, truth; or
- as a combination of all these approaches.

In other words, the provision for RE can be flexible to meet the planning and learning needs of the school, so long as the school ensures that pupil learning, progression and assessment are transparent and coherent and that teachers can report meaningfully on progress and attainment in Religious Education.

2. The educational rationale for RE in the curriculum

2.1 The importance of RE.

[Top](#)

Although RE remains **statutory**, it justifies its place in the curriculum on purely **educational** grounds. It is the opportunity to explore major and distinctive dimensions of human

experience, including:

- a sense of things having a transcendence or divine aspect that calls for reverence or worship;
- spiritual and religious experience and the different ways of interpreting this;
- a sense of belonging to something greater than oneself;
- the tendency to search for meaning, purpose and value in life;
- a sense of a shared humanity and the diverse cultural experiences and expressions of this.

It offers pupils

- the chance to raise and reflect on perennial questions about life;
- insights into the development of different human cultures.

In doing this, RE draws on the rich history of the major religious traditions in Britain, giving due prominence to Christianity to reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the principal world faiths, local communities and non-religious beliefs that may form the family background of many children in our schools.

Thus there are two main educational purposes to RE:

1. For pupils to learn *about* religions and beliefs which have influenced the lives of millions of people and heavily influenced the development of different human cultures. Pupils apply academic skills such as analysis and critical and creative thinking, approaching the study of religion with different disciplines as they mature.
2. For pupils to learn more about themselves and their place in the world *from* their increasingly academic and creative exploration of religions and beliefs.

2.2 RE is both rigorously academic and deeply personal.

Effective RE:

- reaches pupils of any religious faith or none and of all academic abilities;
- challenges pupils to reflect on, engage with, question and explore their own and others' understanding of life;

- does not seek to impose particular beliefs upon pupils, nor to compromise their own beliefs;
- raises questions of identity, meaning and value and encourages people to reflect on their experiences, behaviour and opinions;
- contributes positively and powerfully to the spiritual, personal, social, moral and cultural development of pupils;
- provides opportunities for pupils to develop key skills and thinking skills;
- teaches children and young people about Christian and other religious and non-religious beliefs, practices and responses to ultimate questions so that they can understand the world better and develop their own sense of place within it.

RE has a key role to play in enabling pupils to achieve, and in preparing them for, the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

2.3 RE and Personal Development

RE develops self-concept and personal narrative. It explores moral and social frameworks and encourages pupils to reflect on experience and emotions. It explores health both in specific issues and in the broader sense of the spiritual dimension of life.

RE explores what it means to be a person and the ways we should treat other people, developing understanding of, and respect for, diverse beliefs and cultures and thus contributes to anti-racism and anti-bullying.

RE promotes creative and conceptual thinking and links these to universal and personal human experience so that learning is engaging, reflective, enjoyable and of personal significance. Personal development and academic achievement are woven together so that pupils are able to apply critical thinking to and reflect meaningfully on their spiritual, moral, social and cultural values.

Pupils' own experiences, beliefs and perceptions lie at the heart of RE. This pupil-centred approach both necessitates and ensures that they contribute to their learning.

RE provides the opportunity for pupils to explore and reflect on spiritual and ethical values and thus helps them to develop a social narrative and the personal qualities, attitudes and dispositions that will help them to engage effectively with the world of work and responsible citizenship.

3. The basis for planning quality Religious Education

[Top](#)

The Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus provides the aims, objectives and structure for planning learning in RE. It specifies broadly what must be taught, whilst allowing teachers' professional judgement to determine the detail, order and methods to be used. It also specifies the principles of progression and assessment to provide a coherent structure for planning, in helping pupils make progress, and in reporting and target setting.

Note: it is not, nor can it be, a detailed scheme of work to be delivered by teachers to pupils.

The Agreed Syllabus is the long-term planning document for Religious Education in Oxfordshire. In it the content is outlined in terms of questions and concepts to be explored at each Key Stage through the religions. From these, subject co-ordinators will be able to use their professional judgement to plan 'Learning Structures' (Schemes of Work) appropriate to their pupils' learning needs, backgrounds and experiences and the school's curriculum mapping. This forms the medium term planning for RE.

Lesson plans or 'chunks of learning', drawn up by individual teachers, form the short-term planning by which the school's Learning Structures are transposed in an appropriate way into learning experiences and opportunities, in the classroom or beyond, for individual pupils and groups of pupils.

3.1 The Agreed Syllabus has four aims for RE: to enable pupils to

1. understand the nature, role and influence of different religions, traditions, beliefs and lifestyles in the world;
2. pursue personal quest for meaning, purpose and value;
3. formulate reasoned opinions/arguments in relation to controversial issues and truth claims;
4. develop understanding of and respect for different beliefs and lifestyles.

Aims 1-3 are divided into 'stepping-stones' for progression across key stages. See section 5.2 'Progression through the aims of the Agreed Syllabus'. *Aim 4 is not included in this progression, as it is achieved through the first three aims.*

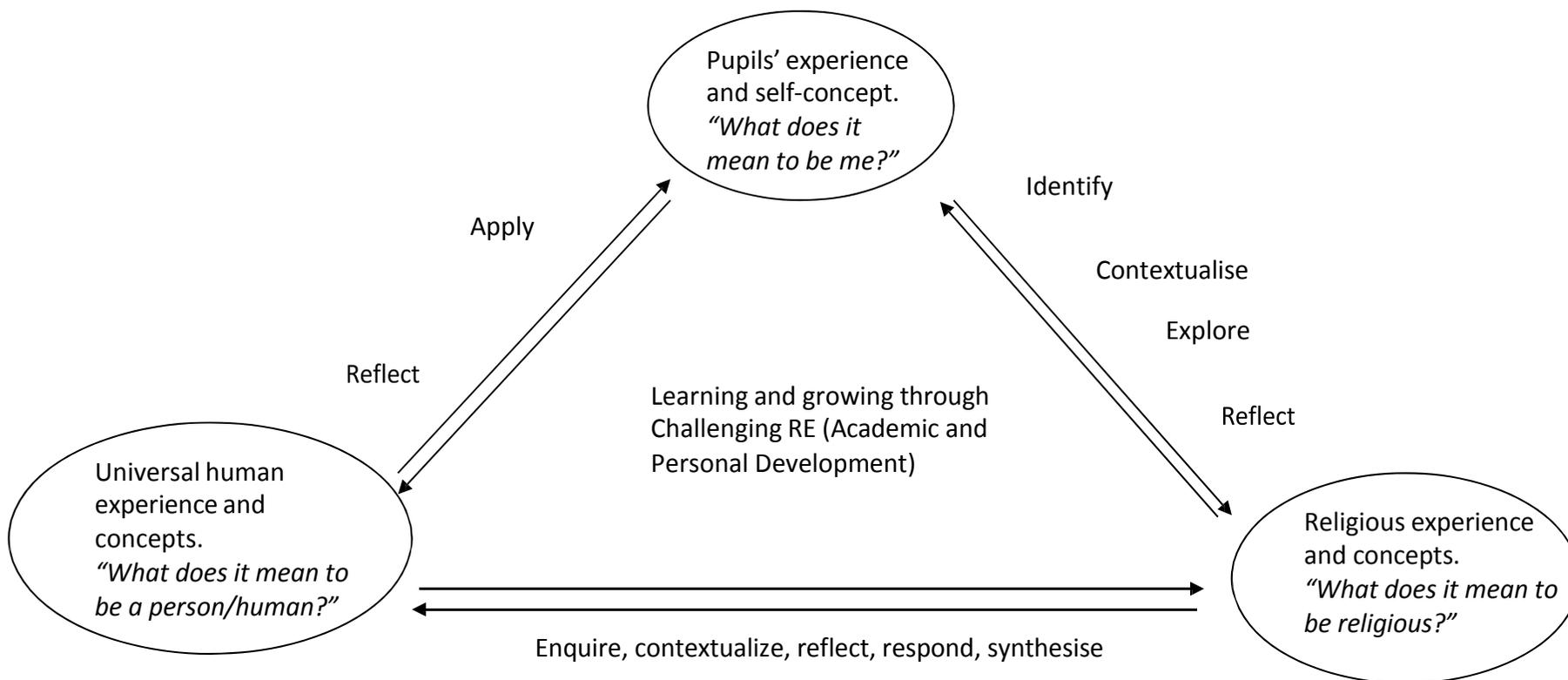
3.2 The Learning Process for 'Challenging RE'.

The Agreed Syllabus is built around a vision of education in which the core purpose is human development. This includes the academic, personal, spiritual, moral, social, cultural, aesthetic and physical development, both of individuals and their interpersonal development in community. Education's main role is to enable children and young people to develop those skills, areas of knowledge, values, attitudes and dispositions that society considers to be important; to equip them to meet the challenges and opportunities of life; and to help them grow as citizens of their locality, nation and world.

The model shown below reflects this in the context of RE. Learning in RE involves helping pupils make sense of life. Learning about religions, beliefs and lifestyles is the vehicle through which they develop their understanding of themselves, others and the world. Pupils will grow to recognise how people are different from one another

and what they all hold in common (what is referred to as 'identity-in-difference'), so that through their exploration of religions and beliefs they will develop their own understanding of what it means to be human, and foster their own sense of meaning, purpose and values.

The model below incorporates skills, development and progression. The skills running clockwise along the sides of the triangle are described for each key stage to help teachers plan challenging learning. See the start of each Key Stage and also section 5.3 'Progression through the learning process' for more detail.



In their planning, teachers can start anywhere on the model, although KS1 is most likely to start with the pupils' own experience, KS2 with the religious experience and KS3 with universal experience. This process will be found at the start of each key stage section to show progress and expectations.

3.3 Concepts in RE

[Top](#)

Concepts are key ideas that shape our understanding. In RE these relate to how we understand or make sense of our lives and the world around us – for example, identity; purpose; value. So in RE concepts are closely related to experience in the lives of children, young people and their communities.

Concepts are complex and can be expressed in different ways, which include some or all of:

- Language
- Art
- Music
- Drama
- Dance
- Symbol
- Ritual

In order to help map concepts in RE, they are often divided into three categories:

1. universal human concepts
2. general religious concepts
3. religion-specific concepts

It is not possible to produce a definitive list of concepts in RE, or to structure them in agreed categories, but the support materials have illustrative examples to help in planning.

3.4 **Conceptual Creativity: engaging pupils in their learning and building bridges between the pupils' experience and the religious context.**

Central to the approach to learning in 'Challenging RE' is the process of building conceptual bridges between the pupils' own lives and the religious content that they explore. Whether the pupil comes from a particular faith background or none, religious education must engage all pupils in meaningful learning that they can apply to their own lives.

Thus in order to provide opportunities for all children to learn and grow through their experiences of religious education, we have to take their own experience seriously, whilst at the same time expanding their understanding and horizons. In this way they can appreciate the relevance to life in the modern world and their own lives of the beliefs, practices and lifestyles found in the principal faiths and beliefs.

This approach is developed more fully in appendix 2.

3.5 Inclusion and Special Educational Needs

[Top](#)

The Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus is the RE entitlement of all pupils in maintained schools and therefore supports the principles of inclusion as set out in the National Curriculum:

- a) setting suitable learning challenges;
- b) responding to pupils' diverse learning needs;
- c) overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

As the subject matter of RE sometimes raises sensitive issues, it is important that teachers are aware of, and are sensitive to, the background and personal circumstances of their pupils.

It is expected that teachers of pupils with special educational needs will modify the RE provision according to their own situation, meeting the needs of the children in the most appropriate way. This also includes meeting the needs and challenges of the most able pupils.

The guidance that follows for Special Schools may also prove helpful to teachers of pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schooling.

RE in Special Schools

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

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

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

- a) Be sensitive to and meet the needs of the individual child.
- b) Set challenging tasks, but have realistic expectations of what they can do and celebrate their responses.
- c) Make the pupils' experience of RE meaningful, taking account of their ability and special educational need.

Some pupils will be able to work factually but not relate to feelings and meanings. Others will find factual detail confusing and will need a more sensory and experiential approach in their RE lessons. **It is up to the teacher's professional judgement and personal knowledge of the child to decide how best to meet the needs of individual pupils.**

For example, pupils with Educational and Behavioural difficulties will have short concentration spans and so will not cope with extensive reading, research and writing. The school may well decide it is more fitting to have short sessions more frequently during the week – the 'little and often' approach. A more active and varied lesson will help these pupils gain from their experience of RE.

We suggest that teachers use activities and resources that best meet the needs of their pupils. kinaesthetic, visual and aural approaches should be considered whilst acknowledging the preferred learning styles of pupils.

Teachers should choose appropriate content from the Agreed Syllabus. *For example, Rites of Passage during KS2, birth and marriage may be more accessible to particular pupils than initiation rites. Professional judgement and personal knowledge of the pupils will inform practice. Similarly, studying more than one religion may overload some pupils with facts so, if appropriate, only one religion in addition to Christianity might be studied.*

4. What pupils will learn

4.1 Which religions to study

[Top](#)

In order to meet the statutory requirement that religious education must reflect the fact that ‘the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain’, schools should focus on Christianity by exploring all core questions through Christian traditions, rituals, beliefs and lifestyles. Other faiths, traditions and beliefs should be used to broaden and deepen the exploration of the questions, so that pupils develop a growing awareness and understanding of the nature, role and influence of different religions, traditions, beliefs and lifestyles in the world as they progress through the Key Stages. However, it is not good educational practice to study all religions in depth over a single Key Stage, therefore the following restrictions apply. In deciding which to choose, schools should consider the following:

1. What are the religious/belief backgrounds of the pupils?
2. How will the RE programme contribute to an understanding of the six principal faiths?
3. How do feeder and transfer schools liaise to ensure broad coverage of faiths?
4. Is a balance between western and eastern religions being provided?

RE in the Early Years Foundation Stage should support the achievement of the Early Learning Goals through appropriate subject content, according to the needs of the pupils and the resources and expertise of the staff.

Through the primary curriculum (Key Stages 1 and 2) schools should focus on Christianity whilst also drawing from Hinduism, Islam and Judaism, as well as non-religious worldviews, to provide appropriate depth and breadth to the exploration of the core questions and to meet the needs of the pupils. Reference to other religions, traditions, beliefs and lifestyles can be used to illustrate specific points, to reflect world events, or to include those represented in the class.

At Key Stage 3, schools should focus on Christianity whilst also drawing from Buddhism and Sikhism, as well as non-religious worldviews, to provide appropriate depth and breadth to the exploration of the core questions and to meet the needs of the students. Reference to other religions, traditions, beliefs and lifestyles can be used to illustrate specific points, to reflect world events, or to include those represented in the class.

The 14 – 19 Curriculum

At Key Stage 4, pupils should study Christianity plus one or at most two other religions in depth, and it is strongly recommended that this is done through a recognised accredited course to provide appropriate challenge and the opportunity for a qualification. Students do not have to be entered for the examination at the end of the course.

For Sixth Form RE, there should ideally be the opportunity to opt to study the subject as an academic qualification, although this is not always feasible given budgets, staffing and take-up. However, it is expected that schools will follow the principles outlined at the start of the section on RE in the Sixth Form, which provides for a flexible and manageable approach to continuing and deepening students' exploration of the impact and challenges of living in a multi-faith and secular society.

In primary and secondary schools, RE has two attainment

targets: AT1 Learning about Religion

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| a) beliefs and teachings | what people believe |
| b) practices and lifestyles | what people do |
| c) expression and language | how people express themselves |

AT2 Learning from Religion

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| d) identity and experience | making sense of who we are |
| e) meaning and purpose | making sense of life |
| f) values and commitments | making sense of right and wrong |

Please note:

- a) Collective worship is not part of taught curriculum time and may not be used as religious education provision. It is a totally separate part of school life.
- b) It is strongly advised that the teaching of RE in secondary schools should be by specialist teachers wherever possible and that all schools should have an RE co-ordinator or subject leader.

4.2 RE in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

[Top](#)

As the 1988 Education Reform Act clearly states, all registered pupils in maintained schools have an entitlement to Religious Education and thus it must be taught to Reception classes. However, the way learning here is structured is through the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and not through the Agreed Syllabus itself. Teachers should use the Early Learning Goals (or equivalent if the Government changes these) as the basis of their assessment and planning, and what follows is suggested guidance on what RE can contribute to learning in the EYFS. Remember, this is only statutory for registered pupils (YR), but it is good practice to provide for all EYFS some context of belief, belonging and relationships from different cultural and global contexts.

In planning and guiding children's activities for RE in Reception classes, as with for all learning in the EYFS, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

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

RE provides excellent opportunities for children to develop and practise their learning through role play, story, speaking and listening and developing and expressing their own views and opinions whilst listening to and learning from the views of others.

There are seven areas of learning and development in EYFS, the **three prime areas (P)** and **four specific areas (S)**:

- **P1 communication and language** development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations. Opportunities for this in RE might include: children have opportunities to respond creatively, imaginatively and meaningfully to memorable experiences; using a religious celebration as a stimulus, children talk about the special events associated with the celebration; through artefacts, stories and music, children learn about important religious celebrations.

Example of an activity

In the context of a learning theme to do with 'books' or 'favourite stories', children look at a child's Haggadah and are encouraged to ask questions about it. The children are told that the book belongs to a Jewish child who is celebrating Passover. The story of Passover is briefly told. Children are invited to think about their favourite books. The teacher talks about the child learning Hebrew and having an important job to do at the celebration meal. Children think about where and how they learn and how it feels to do something really well. They learn the words 'Jewish' and 'Hebrew'. They use language in role-playing a family meal. They look at and talk about a variety of dual-language books, share other old stories from both oral and written traditions and make a class book based on a favourite story or a celebration they have shared. A questions board is set up for children to record any questions that come into their heads. Through these experiences, they learn about the importance of story and sacred texts in religion, develop respect for the beliefs and values of others and extend their vocabulary.

- **P2 physical development** involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive, and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food. Exploring religious food, dance and traditions can be a means through which children develop in this area.

- **P3 personal, social and emotional development** involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities. Opportunities for this in RE might include: children use some stories from religious traditions as a stimulus to reflect on their own feelings and experiences and explore them in various ways; using a story as a stimulus, children reflect on the words and actions of characters and decide what they would have done in a similar situation. They learn about the story and its meanings through activity and play; using role-play as a stimulus, children talk about some of the ways that people show love and concern for others and why this is important; children think about issues of right and wrong and how humans help one another.

Example of an activity

In the context of a learning theme to do with 'growing' or 'the natural world', children encounter the parable of the mustard seed. They look at and talk about some tiny seeds and the teacher tells the parable, putting it into context as a story Jesus told. The teacher emphasises how, in the story, the tree that grew from the little seed became a safe home for birds. Children talk about what helps them to feel safe. They take a walk to look at trees and touch trees. They think about how they should look after trees. They talk about what it would be like to fly up into the branches. They plant seeds and role-play the growth of the seed in dance. They produce shared or independent writing on what they would like to grow into. Through these experiences children become more aware of themselves, for example of the concepts 'I am growing', 'I need to feel safe'. They respond to the significant experiences of exploring a story and wonder at the growth of seeds. They learn to understand their responsibility to the natural world and begin to consider beliefs about Jesus.

- **S1 literacy** development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials associated with religious stories, celebrations, people and traditions) to ignite their interest.
- **S2 mathematics** involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems, and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.
- **S3 understanding the world** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment. Opportunities for this in RE might include: children ask and answer questions about religion and culture as they occur naturally within their everyday experiences; children visit places of worship; they listen and respond to a wide range of religious and ethnic groups; they handle artefacts with curiosity and respect; having visited a local place of worship, children learn new words associated with the place, showing respect.

Example of an activity

In the context of a learning theme to do with 'buildings' or 'special places', children are shown a selection of pictures. They then learn about three different places children go with their families to worship God: a church, a gurdwara and a mosque. Children are invited to talk about the pictures of places of worship, looking for common and distinctive features. Children talk about somewhere they have been that they will remember. They go out and photograph significant places (and people) in the local area and display their pictures in school. They visit a place of worship and record what they see. They talk about building materials and how they are used. They look at patterns. They sort collections of photographs of buildings and they compare buildings in their local environment and far away. They talk particularly about the local church, gurdwara and mosque in comparison with a cathedral, the

Golden Temple and the Ka'aba. Through these experiences, children learn about the importance of places of worship, relating this to their own special places. They begin to be aware of their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people.

- **S4 expressive arts and design** involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology using religious artefacts as a stimulus, children think about and express meanings associated with the artefact; children share their own experiences and feelings and those of others, and are supported in reflecting on them.

Example of an activity

In the context of a learning theme to do with 'water', 'journeys' or 'the natural world', children look at a sealed pot that has water from the Ganges river inside it. Once they know that the pot contains water, they are encouraged to imagine a wide, flowing river. They look at photographs or videos of rivers and waterfalls and talk about how water moves. They hear the story of the birth of the river Ganges (regarded by Hindus as sacred). The teacher emphasises that it is a story that helps some people imagine what God might be like. They look at photographs of Hindus bathing in the Ganges and talk about why the river is important to them. They are invited to think about their ideas about heaven. In response to the story, they explore water through play. They create a great river collage, using a variety of media. They make a river dance using lengths of coloured fabric and accompany it with percussion music. Through these experiences, children develop their imagination through a variety of creative and expressive arts. They begin to think about the importance of water as a symbol in religion and why some people regard particular places as sacred.

The Areas of Learning highlight some particular links with RE, but remember that it is the early learning goals (ELGs) through which progress in each theme is measured, not specific RE knowledge, targets or levels. The suggestions listed below provide a broad range of topics that can support the themes and ELGs, but should not be seen as prescriptive.

Possible topic areas with RE

Myself	Belonging	Expressing our feelings
Other people	Important things	Religious stories and what they mean. Exploring belief
How I live	Important experiences	Celebrations

It is entirely at the discretion of the Early Year's provider whether these topics are taught separately or within cross-curricular themes. Cultures and faiths represented locally should be a focus for the children's learning.

The environment in which learning takes place can provide many contexts in which young children may explore religion and ask questions. Such contexts might include:

- the home corner;
- dressing up boxes;
- interest areas;
- artefacts;
- story books;
- jigsaws;
- object trays;
- dolls;
- painting and drawing.

In order to meet the Early Learning Goals and the requirements of the Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus, Reception classes should include specific planned activities (for example on festivals, special places) as well as unplanned opportunities for developing children's knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs through circle time, pupil initiated learning and daily routines.

4.3 Key Stage 1: Enquiring into experience and feelings

What is special in and about life?

[Top](#)

Throughout key stage 1, pupils explore key questions through conceptual enquiry into Christianity whilst also drawing from at least one of Hinduism, Islam or Judaism, as well as non-religious worldviews as appropriate. Teachers should also take the pupils' own background, experiences and questions into consideration. They learn about different beliefs about God and the world around them. They encounter and respond to a range of stories, artefacts and other religious materials. They learn to recognise that beliefs are expressed in a variety of ways, and begin to use specialist vocabulary. They begin to understand the importance and value of religion and belief, especially for other children and their families. Pupils ask relevant questions and develop a sense of wonder about the world, using their imaginations. They talk about what is important to them and others, valuing themselves, reflecting on their own feelings and experiences and developing a sense of belonging.

A: Progression and assessment in KS1

i. Through the aims:

Aims	To understand the nature, role and influence of religion in the world	To pursue personal quest for meaning, purpose and value	To formulate reasoned opinion/argument
Key Stage 1 pupils will be able to:	show basic knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other faiths in the world, exploring similarities between religions.	reflect on the significance of personal experience and emotion.	gain the necessary knowledge to be able to give one or more valid reasons for an opinion.

ii. Through the learning process:

Pupils' experience and self-concept	Identify: pupils recognise what is significant to them in their immediate experience and recognise basic concepts used to express this.	Contextualise: pupils see their own experience in the light of their background and compare this sensitively with the experiences of other pupils in the class.	Explore: pupils find out about other people's experience and feelings in a way that is sensitive and appropriate and to relate their own experience and that of others to the general concepts being developed.	Reflect: pupils think about their experience and the feelings related to it and see how these affect themselves and others.	
Religious experience and concepts	Enquire: pupils find out about the religions studied.	Contextualise: pupils recognise religious experience and concepts in the religion being explored, and the feelings that may arise from them for believers.	Reflect: pupils think about religious experience and concepts and their importance to believers and consider how these make a difference to how people live.	Respond: pupils express, sensitively and in a variety of ways, their own views about religious experience and concepts.	Synthesise: pupils identify similarities and differences between their own experience and the religious beliefs, practices and concepts.

Universal human experience and concepts	Reflect: pupils reflect on what they can learn from others.	Apply: pupils apply their learning to their own life.			
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B: Knowledge, skills and understanding

Learning about religion

Pupils should be enabled to:

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

Learning from religion

Pupils should be enabled to:

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

C: Breadth of study

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

Religions and beliefs

- Christianity;
- at least one other principal religion from Hinduism, Islam and Judaism;

- a religious community with a significant local presence, where appropriate;
- non-religious views.

Experiences and opportunities

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

KS1 framework questions

- a) What do people believe about God, humanity and the natural world?
- b) What makes some stories special in religion?
- c) How and why are celebrations important in religion?
- d) How and why do symbols express religious meaning?
- e) What makes some teachers and leaders special for religious people?
- f) What do we get out of belonging to different groups and how do we show that we belong?
- g) What makes me special?

These questions should be explored through conceptual enquiry into Christianity drawing from one of Hinduism, Islam or Judaism, as well as non-religious worldviews as appropriate to current issues, educational balance and the pupils' own background, experience and questions.

4.4 KS2 Enquiring into experience and beliefs:

[Top](#)

How do religious and other beliefs, traditions and practices make a difference in people's lives?

Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils explore key questions through conceptual enquiry into Christianity whilst also drawing from Hinduism, Islam and Judaism, as well as non- religious worldviews as appropriate, recognising the impact of religion and belief locally, nationally and globally. They make connections between differing aspects of religion and consider the different forms of religious expression. They consider the beliefs, teachings, practices and ways of life central to religion. They learn about sacred texts and other sources and consider their meanings. They begin to recognise diversity in religion, learning about similarities and differences both within and between religions and beliefs and the importance of dialogue between them. They extend the range and use of specialist vocabulary. They recognise the challenges involved in distinguishing between ideas of right and wrong, and valuing what is good and true. They communicate their ideas, recognising other people's viewpoints.

They consider their own beliefs and values and those of others in the light of their learning in religious education.

A: Progression and assessment in KS2

i. Through the aims:

Aims	To understand the nature, role and influence of religion in the world	To pursue personal quest for meaning, purpose and value	To formulate reasoned opinion/argument
Key Stage 2 pupils will be able to:	show knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other faiths in the world exploring similarities and differences between and within religions; understand what it means to belong to a religious community and the influence	think about what influences our beliefs and lifestyle and the way we see things; explore different religious and non-religious beliefs about meaning, purpose and value.	gain basic understanding of some beliefs to be able to give reasons for and against an opinion; develop awareness of the influence of beliefs on attitudes and behaviour.

ii. Through the learning process:

Pupils' experience and self-concept	Identify: pupils can identify people, concepts, beliefs and attitudes that have an influence on how they live their lives.	Contextualise: pupils see own way of life in relation to the influences identified and to recognise that other people will have different influences affect how they live.	Explore: pupils ask thoughtful and searching questions their own and other people's beliefs, attitudes and ways of life.	Reflect: pupils evaluate and weigh up their own ideas, beliefs and way of life in relation to those of other people.	
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Religious experience and concepts	Enquire: pupils research into religious beliefs, practices and concepts in a way that is thoughtful, searching and sensitive to difference.	Contextualise: pupils relate religious beliefs and concepts to the practices, lifestyles and attitudes of the religions studied, identifying similarities and differences between and within religions.	Reflect: pupils consider what is of value to religious people through their exploration of religious beliefs, concepts and practices and how this makes a difference to people's lives.	Respond: pupils respond sensitively and with reasoned argument to religious beliefs and concepts in relation to the difference they make to believers' attitudes and ways of life	Synthesise: pupils relate the religious beliefs, concepts and practices to their own experience and values and consider these in the light of religious values.
Universal human experience and concepts	Reflect: pupils reflect on their learning and how this relates to human values, responsibilities and rights.	Apply: pupils apply values and beliefs to their own and others' experience and lives.			

B: Knowledge, skills and understanding

Learning about religion

Pupils should be enabled to:

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

Learning from religion

Pupils should be enabled to:

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

C: Breadth of study

During the Key Stage, pupils should be taught the **Knowledge, skills and understanding** through the following areas of study:

Religions and beliefs

- Christianity;
- at least two other principal religions from Hinduism, Islam and Judaism;
- a religious community with a significant local presence, where appropriate;
- a secular world view, where appropriate.

Experiences and opportunities

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

KS 2 framework questions

- a) How do people's beliefs about and attitudes towards God, the universe and humanity act as a guide through life?
- b) What do different sacred texts teach about life and how do they influence people differently?
- c) In what different ways do people worship and what difference does this make in their lives??
- d) What makes some occasions in life significant and how and why are these recognised and celebrated?
- e) How are religious and spiritual ideas expressed and why is literal language not adequate?
- f) What is it about key religious figures that makes them inspirational for religious believers?
- g) How should people's religious and other beliefs, values and attitudes influence their personal lives and is it possible to live up to this?
- h) How do religious families and communities practice their faith and how is this seen in local communities?
- i) How do religions and beliefs influence the way people respond to global issues such as human rights, social justice and the environment?

These questions should be explored through conceptual enquiry into Christianity, drawing from at least one and no more than two from Hinduism, Islam or Judaism, as well as non-religious worldviews and other religious traditions as appropriate to current issues, educational balance and the pupils' own background, experience and questions.

4.5 KS3 Enquiring into religion, experience and ultimate questions:

[Top](#)

How do religious and other beliefs, traditions and practices help in the search for meaning, purpose and value?

Throughout Key Stage 3, pupils explore key questions through conceptual enquiry into Christianity whilst also drawing strongly from Buddhism and Sikhism, as well as

non-religious worldviews and religious traditions as appropriate to current issues, balance and the pupils' own background, experiences and questions. They deepen their understanding of important beliefs, concepts and issues of truth and authority in religion. They apply their understanding of religious and philosophical beliefs, teachings and practices to a range of ultimate questions and ethical issues, with a focus on self-awareness, relationships, rights and responsibilities. They enquire into and explain some personal, philosophical, theological and cultural reasons for similarities and differences in religious beliefs and values, both within and between religions. They interpret religious texts and other sources, recognising both the power and limitations of language and other forms of communication in expressing ideas and beliefs. They reflect on the impact of religion and belief in the world, considering both the importance of interfaith dialogue and the tensions that exist within and between religions and beliefs. They develop their evaluative skills, showing reasoned and balanced viewpoints when considering their own and others' responses to religious, philosophical and spiritual issues.

A: Progression and assessment in KS3

i. Through the aims:

Aims	To understand the nature, role and influence of religion in the world	To pursue personal quest for meaning, purpose and value	To formulate reasoned opinion/argument
Key Stage 3 pupils will be able to:	perceive the way religious teaching and practice relate to ultimate questions; reflect on the benefits and challenges of living in a multi-faith and diverse society.	raise and explore the ultimate questions which are contained in religious beliefs and practices; develop personal responses to ultimate questions in the light of their own and others'	reflect on their own and others' responses, religious and secular, to ultimate questions and the impact these responses can have in the world

ii. Through the learning process:

Pupil's experience and self-concept	Identify: pupils can identify their responses to ultimate questions and the way these link to their own experience.	Contextualise: pupils relate their own concepts and beliefs that help them make sense of life to their own experience and consider different views around the	Explore: pupils ask thoughtful and searching questions about their own and other people's beliefs and attitudes expressed in response to ultimate	Reflect: pupils think critically about their own and others' responses to ultimate questions in the light of other ideas and questions expressed in the	
Religious experience and concepts	Enquire: pupils enquire into a range of religious responses to ultimate questions as expressed in beliefs, practices and ways of life.	Contextualise: pupils relate different religious responses to ultimate questions to differences in interpretation and practice within and between religions.	Reflect: pupils reflect on the concepts that underpin religious responses to ultimate questions as expressed in the phenomena of religions.	Respond: pupils respond sensitively and with reasoned argument to religious beliefs and concepts in relation to the difference they make to believers' attitudes and ways of life.	Synthesise: pupils relate religious responses to ultimate questions to their own experience and ideas and consider how their views have developed.
Universal human experience and concepts	Reflect: pupils reflect on their learning about what it means to be a person.	Apply: pupils apply values and concepts explored in their learning to their own experience and self-understanding.			

B: Knowledge, skills and understanding

Learning about religion

Pupils should be enabled to:

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

Learning from religion

Pupils should be enabled to:

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

C: Breadth of study

During the Key Stage, pupils should be taught the **Knowledge, skills and understanding** through the following areas of study:

Religions and beliefs

- Christianity;
- Buddhism and Sikhism with aspects of other faiths;
- a religious community with a significant local presence, where appropriate;
- a secular world view, where appropriate.

Experiences and opportunities

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

KS3 questions framework

- a) What is the significance in people's lives of key beliefs and concepts about God, humanity, the world, truth and life and death?
- b) What sources of authority influence how people live their lives and how reliable are they?
- c) To what extent are the concepts of truth, explanation, meaning and purpose in religion and science complementary or conflicting?
- d) In what different ways are ideas of human purpose, meaning and identity expressed and what makes it difficult to do so?
- e) How do different religious and other beliefs, concepts, principles and experience inform ethical and moral stances, relationships and lifestyles?
- f) How do different religious and other beliefs, concepts, principles and experience inform views and actions on human rights and social justice?
- g) How do different religious and other beliefs, concepts, principles and experience inform views and actions on global issues?
- h) How well do different beliefs, traditions and lifestyles work together for the good of the world? Why can't people all agree?

These questions should be explored through conceptual enquiry into Christianity drawing strongly from Buddhism and Sikhism, as well as non-religious worldviews and religious traditions as appropriate to current issues, educational balance and the pupils' own background, experience and questions.

4.6 Key Stage 4 Curriculum

[Top](#)

At Key Stage 4, students may either follow an external examination syllabus, such as Full or Short Course GCSE, or the Programme of Study outlined below. **Being entered for a GCSE (or equivalent) qualification is not statutory at KS4** and so, even if students follow an externally assessed course, they do not have to be entered for the actual examination. However, assessment of progress through any course must take place either using the 8-level scale or the assessment criteria of the course being studied. Pupils should study Christianity and either one or two other religions in depth, with reference to other religions as appropriate. Remember that over the course of their secondary schooling, pupils should have gained some knowledge and understanding of all six main faiths represented in Britain.

Principles for planning General RE at KS4

- A. The Agreed Syllabus requires schools to provide students with the opportunity to:
- develop their knowledge and understanding of the nature, role and influence of religion in the world;
 - pursue a personal quest for meaning, purpose and value in their lives and the lives of others;
 - develop their skills and ability to formulate reasoned opinion/argument and handle controversial issues and truth claims;
 - develop understanding of and respect for different beliefs and lifestyles.
- B. All planned learning must:
- draw on the experience and ideas of the students;
 - relate to appropriate religious content;
 - develop the students' experience and ideas in relation to the religious content.
- C. Planning should be based on the **two Attainment Targets** for RE, using the descriptors for level 4 to 'Exceptional Performance' (EP).
- AT1 Learning about Religion*
- AT2 Learning from Religion*

The levels should be used to plan appropriately challenging learning using challenging tasks and enquiries, and to assess progression in learning.

Over the course of the Key Stage, pupils must be given the opportunity to do some work from each of the nine following areas. The four sub-headings in each are for exemplification only.

Religion and life

Area 1

Religion and the family

- e.g.
- religion in the home
 - birth ceremonies
 - the role of the family
 - family relationships and responsibilities

2

Religion in the community

- e.g.
- belief and custom
 - diversity
 - conflict and harmony
 - leaders and centres

3

Religion and the individual

- e.g.
- personal faith and belief
 - expressing the faith
 - living the faith
 - commitment to faith

Religion and moral issues Area 4

Religion and life issues

- e.g.
- medical ethics

- the right to die
- animal rights
- capital punishment

- 5 Religion and relationships**
 e.g. - sex and relationships
 - marriage, partnership and commitment
 - problems and separation
 - prejudice and discrimination

- 6 Religion and global issues**
 e.g. - human rights
 - environment
 - poverty
 - war and violence

**Religion and
 Ultimate Questions**
 (including spirituality)

- Area 7 Religion and moral values**
 e.g. - absolute and relative morality
 - moral authority
 - good and evil
 - the problems of evil and suffering

- 8 Religion and human identity**
 e.g. - origins of life
 - sanctity of life
 - human and animal life
 - death and beyond

- 9 Religion and the world**
 e.g. - origins of the universe
 - the existence of God
 - the nature of God
 - knowledge, belief and faith

4.7 RE in the Sixth Form

[Top](#)

RE in the Sixth Form is an opportunity to engage students at greater depth in issues to do with contemporary religion and belief in society, and approaching it from different disciplines such as philosophy, psychology, sociology, science and literature. It prepares students for a greater understanding of the role of belief and culture in the modern world and enables them to develop more critical approaches to media and popular portrayals of faith, as well as faith issues themselves. It should enable discernment of truth, application of belief and synthesis of perspective.

RE is required for all registered pupils in a school. This includes Sixth Form students. There is a variety of ways in which schools can ensure this provision and schools should choose the best option or combination of options to meet the needs of their students.

Option 1 A level Religious
Studies Option 2 AS Religious
Studies
Option 3 A discrete lesson of General RE
Option 4 As part of a General Studies
course Option 5 RE study/workshop days

The Agreed Syllabus Conference wishes schools to have the maximum curriculum freedom which current legislation on RE permits. To achieve this schools may design their own units or use already existing work in RE or General Studies which the school has taught for a number of years. Alternatively, the work could be of a cross-curricular nature, or work particularly suited to the local circumstances of the school. **All RE in the Sixth Form must meet the requirements set out in the principles below. The expected minimum time for General RE in each year of the Sixth Form is 6 hours over the year – i.e. the equivalent of 1 full day or 2 half day conferences.**

Principles for planning Sixth Form RE units

A. The Agreed Syllabus requires schools to provide students with the opportunity to:

- develop their knowledge and understanding of the nature, role and influence of religion in the world.
- pursue a personal quest for meaning, purpose and value in their lives and the lives of others.
- develop their skills and ability to formulate reasoned opinion/argument and handle controversial issues and truth claims.
- develop understanding of and respect for different beliefs and life-styles.

B. Each unit must have three aims that:

- draw on the experience and ideas of the students;
- relate to appropriate religious content;
- develop the students' experience and ideas in relation to the religious content.

c. Planning should be assisted by the two Attainment Targets for RE and by using the descriptors for level 6 to 'Exceptional Performance' (EP).

AT1 Learning about Religion

- a) beliefs and teachings what people believe
- b) practices and lifestyles what people do
- c) expression and how people express

AT2 Learning from Religion

- d) identity and experience making sense of who we are
- e) meaning and purpose making sense of life
- f) values and making sense of right and

NB: It is important to note that it is not expected that these should in any way be used for assessment purposes in the Sixth Form. **They are purely to be used for planning purposes to ensure that work of an appropriately challenging nature is provided to stimulate learning.**

The following units are suggestions of the type of unit a school might wish to offer:

Religion and philosophy	1	Religion and the existence of God e.g. - can we prove the existence of God? - can we prove there is no God? - God and evil - religion and science
	2	Religion and knowledge e.g. - belief and knowledge - faith and reason - religious experience - religion and language
Religion and ethics	3	Religion and ethical questions e.g. - absolute and relative values - religious and secular ethical theories

	4	Religion and medical ethics e.g. - genetics - euthanasia
	5	Religion and ethical issues e.g. - the environment - sex and sexuality - social justice
Religion and the community	6	Religion around us e.g. - religious communities in Oxfordshire - religion in Britain - religion in the arts - religion and gender issues - religion in the media
	7	Religion in the world e.g. - religion in a changing world - religion and politics - religious conflicts - religion in history

5. Progression and assessment

[Top](#)

It is recognised that there are aspects of RE that cannot and should not be assessed.

‘Challenging RE’ is designed to help teachers plan religious education that is appropriate to the needs and abilities of all pupils. It provides a structure and a language of progression to enable them to do this and to share it with their pupils. It will help with planning, assessment for learning, reporting and target setting and getting. Above all, regardless of the ability of the pupil, it enables them to construct meaningful learning experiences for and develop higher order thinking skills in your pupils. The structure that follows consists of separate sections to help them help their pupils make progress in their religious education, to see what they will have done in earlier stages of learning and what they will be expected to do in later stages.

Progression is reflected in many ways within the Agreed Syllabus (see below).

1. The aims of the Agreed Syllabus (*puts KS learning into context*) **(Statutory AS)**
2. The development of the learning process for each Key Stage; (*helps teachers plan for high expectations*) **(Statutory AS)**

3. The table ‘transition across the key stages’, in which context, skills and opportunities combine to support progression (*helps with expectations and task-setting*)
(Guidance Appendix A4.1)
4. Assessing Pupil Progress (APP) (*helps with task-setting and sharing with pupils and parents what pupils need to do to make progress*) **(Guidance Appendix A4.2)**
5. The 8-level scale for assessing and measuring attainment (*helps with reporting attainment to parents and pupils*) **(Guidance Appendix A4.3)**

Progression is about planning learning experiences that will challenge pupils appropriately so that they gain in skills and perspective as well as in knowledge and understanding. These structures, taken together, will help teachers to identify where pupils are and plan appropriate ways of moving them on in their learning. It is important that all aspects of progression are considered in medium term and lesson planning, so that the two Attainment Targets can be achieved. This provides an assessment tool that is process-led, in which you start with the baseline snapshot of where pupils are, taken from the 8-level Scale (5.6); use the APP (5.5) to identify what pupils need to do to improve; use the transition table (5.4) and the specific KS Learning Process table (5.3) to plan appropriately challenging learning. The Progression through the aims of the Agreed Syllabus provide the wider context of the learning across the Key Stages.

5.1 Assessment

Assessment is a statutory requirement of the Agreed Syllabus. Schools are required to report the level of attainment to parents at the end of Key Stages 2 and 3. For convenience and continuity, the Agreed Syllabus conference agreed that schools will continue with the two Attainment Targets:

AT1 Learning about Religion includes enquiry into, and investigation of, the nature of religion. It focuses on (i) beliefs, teachings and sources; (ii) practices and ways of life and (iii) experience and expression. It includes the skills of interpretation, analysis and explanation. Pupils learn to communicate their knowledge and understanding using specialist vocabulary. It includes identifying and developing an understanding of ultimate questions and ethical issues.

AT2 Learning from Religion is concerned with developing pupils’ critical reflection on, and personal response to, their own experiences and their learning in RE. It develops pupils’ skills of application, interpretation and evaluation of what they learn about religion, particularly questions of (i) identity and belonging; (ii) meaning, purpose, truth and (iii) values and commitments, and communicating their responses.

These are drawn from the Non-statutory National Framework for Religious Education. This will be reviewed in the next revision of the Agreed Syllabus in the light of future developments nationally and locally.

The 8-level scale, taken from the Framework, will help teachers with their planning, provide a scale by which to measure pupil progression and enable teachers to set challenging and meaningful tasks for their pupils. The principles of assessment are the same as those of other subjects and assessment in RE should broadly follow the school’s assessment policy. The level descriptors are intended to be helpful, not restrictive, and provide a ‘best fit’ approach.

Each unit has a 3-level set of 'can-do' statements drawn from the 8-level scale, as appropriate to the expected range of levels for the majority of pupils at each Key Stage: KS1 levels 1-3 (expected level 2)
KS2 levels 3-5 (expected level 4)
KS3 levels 4-6 (expected level 5/6)

It is not necessary to make a detailed record of attainment in relation to the descriptors for each unit. Rather they should help teachers to identify where a pupil's progress differs markedly from that of the rest of the class. There are three main uses of the level descriptors:

1. Most importantly, they provide a structure to aid planning. Teachers should use them to ensure that they deliver RE that challenges pupils, but is also appropriate to their prior attainment.
2. They provide a sense of progression in RE so that teachers can set targets for individual pupils and recognise and assess the progress they make.
3. They provide guidance for recording and reporting. It is intended that the level descriptors for each unit will help teachers record pupil progress and be able to report this to the pupils and their parents in a meaningful way. It is not intended that they should simply be copied to pupils and parents; teachers should transpose them into what the pupil can do and what s/he needs to do to improve.

The Agreed Syllabus does not specify how frequently formal assessment should take place. However, it recommends that most should be formative assessment (assessment for learning) and that in each of Key Stages 2 and 3, there should be no more than 5 formal assessments and fewer in Key Stage 1. Most assessment should be through tasks planned into the learning structures themselves rather than end of unit assessments/tests.

5.2 Progression in ‘Challenging RE’: The aims of the Agreed Syllabus (*puts KS learning into context*)

[Top](#)

Aims	Key Stage 1 pupils	Key Stage 2 pupils	Key Stage 3 pupils	Key Stage 4 pupils
To understand the nature, role and influence of religion in the world by:	showing basic knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other faiths in the world, exploring similarities between religions.	showing knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other faiths in the world exploring similarities and differences between and within religions; understanding what it means to belong to a religious community and the influence religious faith has on	perceiving the way religious teaching and practice relate to ultimate questions; reflecting on the benefits and challenges of living in a multi-faith and diverse society.	analysing and thinking critically about religious and other beliefs and practices and different interpretations of these.
To pursue personal quest for meaning, purpose and value by:	reflecting on the significance of personal experience and emotion.	thinking about what influences our beliefs and lifestyle and the way we see things; exploring different religious and non-religious beliefs about meaning, purpose and value.	raising and exploring the ultimate questions which are contained in religious beliefs and practices; developing personal responses to ultimate questions in the light of their own and others’ experiences and beliefs.	reflecting on their own and others’ responses, religious and secular, to ultimate questions and the impact these can have in the world.
To formulate reasoned opinion/argument by:	gaining the necessary knowledge to be able to give one or more reasons for an opinion.	gaining basic understanding of some beliefs to be able to give reasons for and against an opinion; developing awareness of the influence of beliefs on attitudes and behaviour.	developing the ability to see things from other peoples’ perspective; developing skills of questioning, interpretation, reasoning and justification to build an argument.	developing the ability to analyse strengths and weaknesses in arguments/stances.

5.3 Progression through the learning process (helps teachers to plan for high expectations)

[Top](#)

The table below shows how the different aspects of the learning process and the related skills support progression across the key stages. This can be used for both planning where to pitch learning and also for helping pupils to recognise what they need to do to improve their learning.

The learning process	KS1	KS2	KS3
Pupil's experience and self-concept			
Identify Pupils learn to...	recognise what is significant to them in their immediate experience and recognise basic concepts used to express this.	identify people, concepts, beliefs and attitudes that have an influence on how they live their lives.	identify their responses to ultimate questions and the way these link to their own experience.
Contextualise Pupils learn to...	see their own experience in the light of their background and compare this sensitively with the experiences of other pupils in the class.	see their own way of life in relation to the influences identified and to recognise that other people in the class will have different influences which affect how they live.	relate their own concepts and beliefs that help them to make sense of ultimate questions to their own experience and consider different views around the class.
Explore Pupils learn to...	find out about other people's experience and feelings in a way that is sensitive and appropriate and to relate their own experience and that of others to the general concepts being developed.	ask thoughtful and searching questions about their own and other people's beliefs, attitudes and ways of life.	ask thoughtful and searching questions about their own and other people's beliefs and attitudes expressed in responses to ultimate questions.
Reflect Pupils learn to...	think about their experiences and the feelings related to them and to see how these affect themselves and others.	evaluate and weigh up their ideas, beliefs and way of life in relation to other people's.	think critically about their own and others' responses to ultimate questions in the light of other ideas and questions expressed in the class.
Religious experience and concepts			
Enquire Pupils learn to...	find out about the religions studied.	research into religious beliefs, practices and concepts in a way that that is thoughtful, searching and sensitive to difference.	enquire into a range of religious responses to ultimate questions as expressed in beliefs, practices and ways of life.

Contextualise Pupils learn to...	recognise religious experience and concepts in the religion being explored, and the feelings that may arise from them for believers.	relate religious beliefs and concepts to the practices, lifestyles and attitudes of the religions studied, and to identify differences between and within religions.	relate different religious responses to ultimate questions to differences in interpretation and practice within and between religions.
Reflect Pupils learn to...	think about religious experience and concepts and their importance to believers and consider how these make a difference to how people live.	consider what is of value to religious people through their exploration of religious beliefs, concepts and practices and how this makes a difference to people's lives.	reflect on the concepts that underpin religious responses to ultimate questions as expressed in the phenomena of religions.
Respond Pupils learn to...	express, sensitively and in a variety of ways, their own views about religious experiences and concepts.	respond sensitively and with reasoned argument religious beliefs and concepts in relation to the difference they make to believers' attitudes and ways of life.	think critically about religious responses and their personal responses to ultimate questions using empathy, reasoned argument and critical thinking.
Synthesise Pupils learn to...	identify similarities and differences between their own experience and the religious beliefs, practices and concepts.	relate the religious beliefs, concepts and practices to their own experiences and values and consider these in the light of religious values.	relate religious responses to ultimate questions to their own experience and ideas and consider how their views have developed.
Universal human experience and concepts			
Reflect Pupils learn to...	Reflect on what they can learn from others.	reflect on their learning and how this relates to human values, responsibilities and rights.	reflect on their learning about what it means to be a person.
Apply Pupils learn to...	Apply their learning to their own life.	apply values and beliefs to their own and others' experience and lives.	apply values and concepts explored in their learning to their own and other's experience and self-understanding.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: What is the value of RE in 21st century schools?

[Top](#)

Many people will ask: 'What will my school/child/pupils/society gain from RE? Why give time to RE in an over-crowded curriculum?' These are important questions, which should be considered seriously on educational grounds.

RE helps **pupils** with:

- their intellectual development, critical thinking, literacy, creativity and personal development;
- their ability to reflect on their own and others' experience and so develop their self-understanding and understanding of others;
- handling and responding to the big questions and concepts that arise from experience;
- their authentic knowledge and understanding of different religions, traditions, beliefs and lifestyles within the local community and around the world;
- their personal search for meaning, purpose and value.

RE helps **schools** with:

- their ethos and values;
- their sense of community and belonging;
- their relationships for learning;
- behaviour, expectations and aspirations.

RE helps **society** :

- to grow, share, understand identity and difference within and between communities;
- to deal with controversy, learning how to disagree whilst living together in community;
- to explore meaning and truth, living with diverse values;
- to understand - and respectfully challenge and be challenged by - people with different lifestyles, beliefs and

practices. It helps us as humans to explore visions of humanity and at the same time reflect on the depths to which humanity can sink.

In short, good RE is just what schools and society need to help develop some of the most important skills, attitudes, knowledge, understanding and dispositions that everyone would want for children and young people. Can we imagine a future where people are unable to handle the big questions and concepts of life?

'Challenging RE' is a most appropriate title for this Agreed Syllabus. RE should be academically, personally, spiritually, morally and socially challenging for everyone. We hope you and your pupils will rise to these challenges, get a lot out of the Agreed Syllabus and, over time, be able to contribute to its development through the sharing of support materials.

A model for Religious Education

How we behave affects other people and the world we live

in. This is why our behaviour is an important issue.

Our behaviour is influenced by our attitudes.

Our attitudes are influenced by our experience, background and beliefs.

RE is the opportunity to reflect on our experience and explore the beliefs, practices, values and attitudes that guide us through life by exploring the beliefs, values, practices and ways of life of different religions, traditions, beliefs and lifestyles.

We all play a part in creating the world and society we live in.

What we believe, whether religious or not, contributes significantly to this.

RE helps pupils (and the school as a whole) to reflect on the ways in which beliefs influence how individuals and communities live their lives.

The Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education encourages teachers to adopt a wide range of teaching approaches and RE Pedagogies, including:

- **The Phenomenological Approach** in which pupils study the rituals and dimensions of religions in order to understand the meaning and significance to members of the faith community;
- **The Experiential Approach** which focuses on how RE can help pupils make sense of their own experience in the light of their learning about and from the religious experience of faith communities;
- **The Interpretive Approach** in which pupils learn about the faith through encounter with the experiences, views, beliefs, perspectives, beliefs and ways of life of the members of different faith communities and reflect on the light this sheds on their own world-view and experience;
- **The Conceptual Approach** where the pupils explore the concepts of the religions and reflect on the insights these shed on different ways of understanding and making sense of life;
- **The Personal Quest Approach** focusing on how the study of religion helps pupils to develop their own self-understanding;
- **The Ultimate Questions Approach** where the focus is on exploring meaning, purpose, value and identity through the study of religious responses to the questions that life throws at us.

Naturally there is rich overlap across all these approaches and no one approach adequately covers all aspects of learning in RE, although teachers have their natural preferences.

Appendix 3: **Conceptual Creativity: engaging pupils in their learning and building conceptual bridges between the pupils' experience and the religious context.**

[Top](#)

Central to the approach to learning in the Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus is the process of building bridges between the pupils' own lives and the religious content that they explore. Whether the pupil comes from a particular faith background or none, RE must be relevant to their lives and engage them in meaningful learning that they can apply to life.

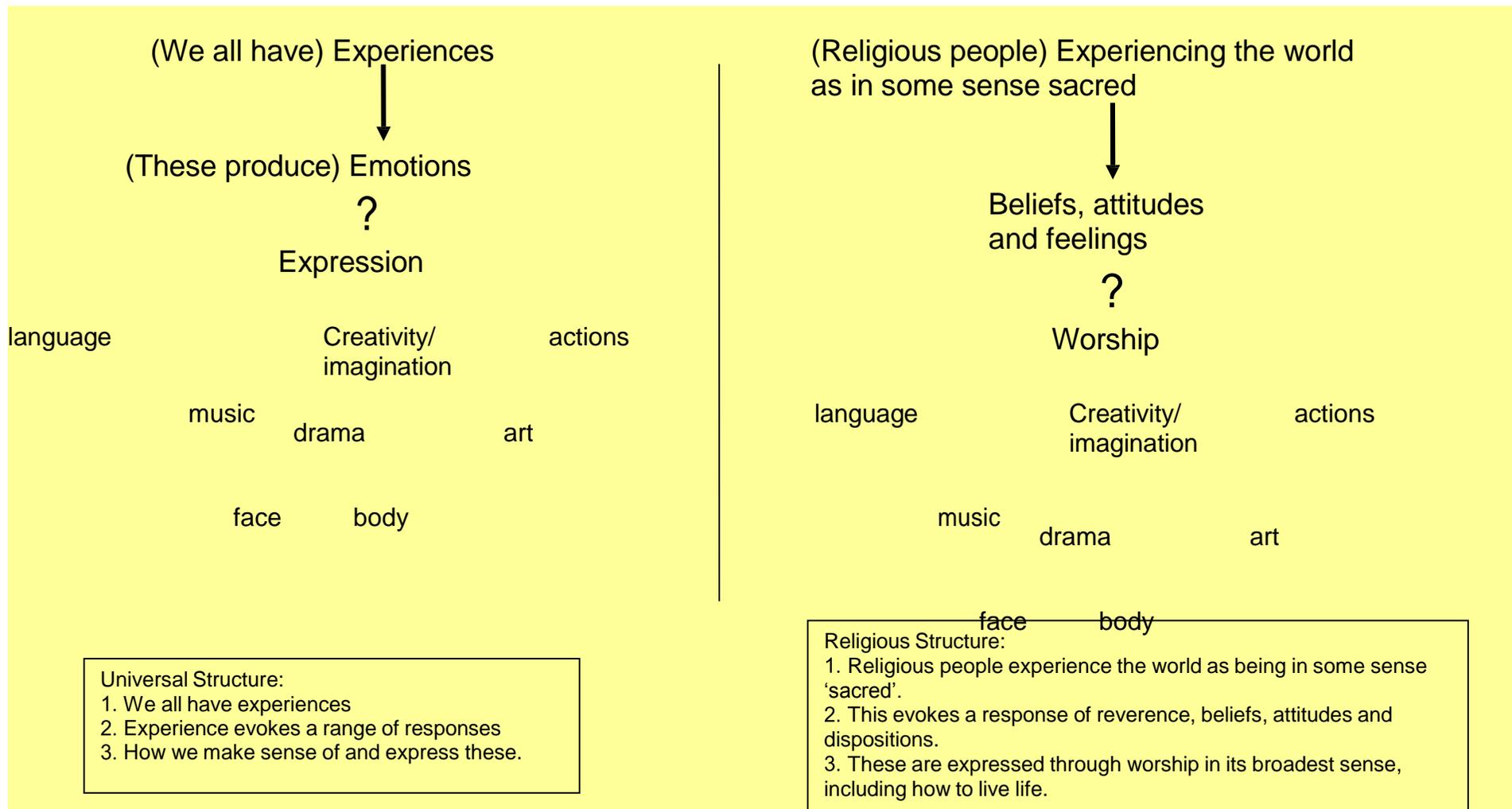
In order to provide opportunities for all children to learn and grow through their experiences of Religious Education, we have to take their own experience seriously whilst expanding their understanding and horizons. In this way they can appreciate the relevance of the beliefs, practices and lifestyles found in the principal faiths and beliefs to life in the modern world and their own lives.

The diagram below provides a structure to help plan this.

The '**universal**' structure on the left of the diagram provides a way of exploring the pupils' own experiences, ideas and feelings: We all have experiences.
These experiences evoke a range of responses (feeling, thinking, challenging).
We need to express these responses and make sense of them, and do so in a variety of ways.

The '**religious**' structure on the right of the diagram mirrors the universal structure, but in the context of a faith perspective: Religions experience the world as being in some sense 'sacred'.
This evokes a response of reverence, beliefs, attitudes and dispositions.
These are expressed through worship in its broadest sense, including how to live life.

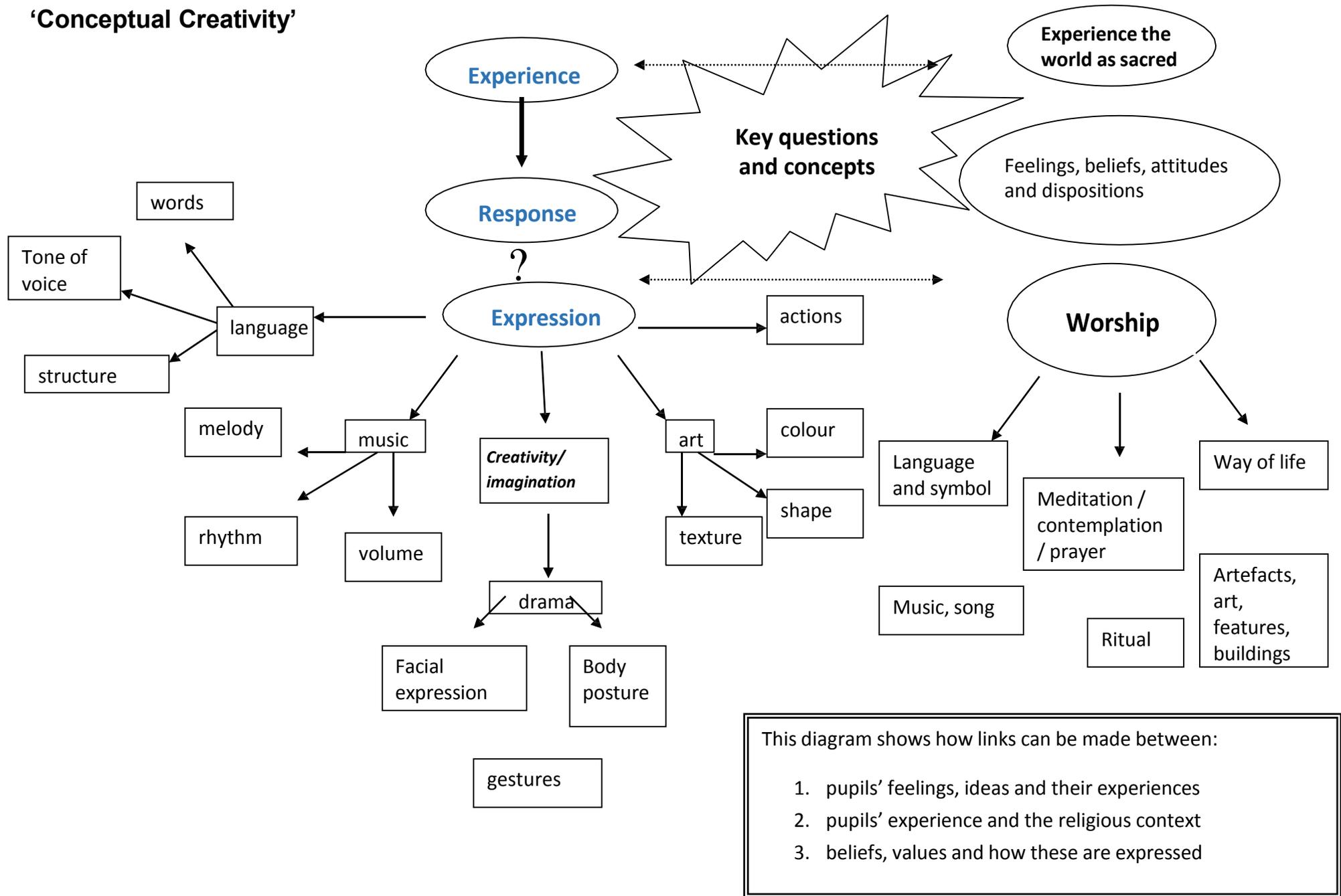
People use a range of ways of expressing these feelings, thoughts and challenges, whether secular or religious, and these can combine in various ways (e.g. words and music = songs): art, music and drama; language; inner creativity and imagination; actions and the way we live our lives



We can now build bridges between the pupils' own experiences and the faith experiences of others through an exploration of questions and concepts. These bridges can start anywhere on the diagram (e.g. music to personal feelings to personal experience and over to religious worship, on to religious belief, feeling or attitude and reflection on relevant concepts and questions) and pupils can engage in creative ways to understand both their own experiences and other people's. However, it is the creative conceptual enquiry that provides the link between the two and which has to occur for there to be any meaningful learning and connection.

This produces engaging, creative, challenging, enjoyable and worthwhile Religious Education, in which pupils genuinely learn and grow.

'Conceptual Creativity'



When planning pupils' learning, think of developing a '**Learning Structure**' that can be divided into '**chunks of learning**', which can last from 1 – 3 lessons.

1. Establish an aim for the learning – why should the pupils learn this? What is the purpose? This should be in the form of a 'big question' and the learning is driven by the question.
2. Identify what you want pupils to learn about and from religion (learning intentions).
3. Identify key concepts and key questions that will help pupils to achieve these.
4. Group concepts in relation to
 - a. Pupils' own experience (e.g. friendship);
 - b. Universal human experience (e.g. relationships);
 - c. Specific religious concepts (e.g. agape).
5. Establish what religious and other content you want pupils to learn.
 - a. Knowledge and understanding;
 - b. Skills;
 - c. Attitudes and personal development..
6. Develop the outline of your Learning Structure (Scheme of Work)
7. Identify learning objectives for each 'chunk of learning' (this means that objectives can carry over more than one lesson).
8. Plan appropriate activities and resources to enable pupils of different abilities and learning styles to achieve the appropriately challenging learning outcomes.
9. Establish what you want to assess over the whole Learning Structure and plan how you will assess it through the learning activities (NB: you do not have to assess everything and most assessment will be formative – i.e. built into tasks set, rather than summative - i.e. end of unit).
10. Identify any contributions to 'learning across the curriculum' (e.g. literacy, ICT, Thinking Skills, Citizenship).
11. Record pupils' attainment against the level descriptors for each unit and use this to inform future planning and to build a picture of pupils' achievement over time.

It is good practice during all stages of the Learning Structure to allow opportunities for pupils to ask their own questions about the concepts and content. This is especially powerful at the start of the learning, with pupils' questions arising from an appropriate stimulus.

A5.1 Transition through the Key Stages in which context, skills and opportunities combine to support progression (*helps with expectations and task- setting*)

The table on the next page, '**Transition across the Key Stages**', shows the general starting point of pupils in that Key Stage in terms of their perspective and the context of their experience. Pupils (and their parents/carers) need to know how well they are doing and what they need to do to make progress. The revised 8-level scale provides the structure for this as well as the pedagogical model for each Key Stage. It is important that this clear framework for progress is built into the learning structure and that pupils are aware of this. The principles of 'Assessment for Learning' should be applied to Religious Education as to any other subject. Progression in Religious Education can also be linked to other issues such as thinking skills and literacy. The requirements for assessment that follow will ensure that pupils are helped to make good progress in Religious Education.

	Pupil's context and starting point	Learning experiences	Learning skills
EY	Me and my family and home. Experience and feeling.	Play (role play; home corner). Talk about own experiences. Ask about other children's experiences.	Tell; recall; recognise; list; name; ask simple questions;
KS1	Me, my friends and groups. Experience and feeling. Focus on feelings, how they arise from experience, how they relate to the basic concepts and how they are expressed.	Visits and visitors. Using senses and reflecting on experience. Reflection and creativity. Sharing ideas, beliefs, feelings and experiences. Use of ICT.	Explore; talk about meaning; compare; identify importance of; explore ways of expression; suggest meanings; give a reason for; reflect on feelings; predict; decide
KS2	Me in my community(ies). Thinking about experience. Focus on concepts relating to beliefs, authority and rituals and how these influence the lives of individuals and communities.	Encountering religious places and communities. Structured discussions. Reflecting on experience, feelings, beliefs and insights. Creative expression of feelings, beliefs and insights. Exploring local and global religion through ICT.	Describe; relate; apply; recommend; interpret; verify; define; contrast; 'what if'; judge; debate; devise; arrange; predict; order; combine; justify; rank; reflect; examine; classify; give evidence for; reflect on questions; respond with reasons
KS3	Me in the world. Challenging experience. Focus on ultimate questions and concepts pertaining to meaning, purpose, truth and values and how these relate to human experience and ethical issues in both religious and secular contexts.	Visits and visitors (people with a range of beliefs). Structured evaluative discussions of arguments and issues. Developing reasoning skills. Creative conceptual understanding and expression. Using ICT to enhance their understanding of religion.	Discuss; explain; relate; assess; argue; define; hypothesise; refer to; reasoned response; respond in light of; empathise; prioritise; organise; reflect; propose; justify; reflect on meaning/interpretation
KS4	Our world, our future. Analysing experience. Focus on analysis of religious and secular beliefs and evaluation of the impact of faith on the world and how it is put into action, positively and negatively, in local, national and global contexts.	Visits, visitors and original sources. Analytical discussions of arguments and issues. Developing evaluative skills. Assessing concepts. Using ICT to enhance their understanding of religion.	distinguish; compare; locate; suggest interpretations from different perspectives; organise concepts; respond from view of; plan; design; reflect; compare; evaluate; reflect on significance
Post 16	My place in the world. Integrating and assimilating experience. Focus on religious and secular philosophies and the extent to which they provide coherent understandings of what it means to be a person.	Visits and visitors and original sources. Conceptual analysis of philosophical arguments. Analyse and criticise arguments and concepts. Present critiques of arguments and concepts. Using ICT to enhance their philosophical research.	Explore structure; perceive internal conceptual inconsistencies; internalise; synthesise; conceptual analysis; reflect on coherence



A5.2 Assessing Pupil Progress (helps with task-setting and sharing with pupils and parents what pupils need to do to make progress)

[Top](#)

Level	AF1 Thinking about religion and belief Pupils:	AF2 Enquiring, investigating and interpreting Pupils:	AF3 Reflecting, evaluating and communicating Pupils:
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can retell important parts of stories from different religions; I can talk about hymns, symbols, art, dance and music in RE; I can use the correct names and words when I talk about my learning in RE. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can say what I find interesting in my learning; I can ask questions about things that puzzle me in RE; I can name some symbols in the religions I have learnt; I can name some other ways that people express their beliefs and feelings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can talk about things that have happened to me and how these made me feel; I can say what is important to me; I can say what is important to someone else.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can retell stories that teach us something; I can retell stories from different religions; I can say how people show what they believe in different religions; I can find some things which are the same and some that are different about the religions and beliefs I have learned about. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I know that some questions about life are difficult to answer; I can ask questions about what happens to others and how it makes them feel; I can think about things that happen to me and show how they make me feel; I can tell what symbols mean and the way people show their religious belief. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can listen respectfully to what happens to other people and ask thoughtful, imaginative questions about their feelings; I can answer carefully when others ask me questions what happens to me and how I feel; I can give a reason why something is important to me; I can give a reason why something is important to someone else.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I know that some stories affect the way some people behave; I know that what people do in their lives can be affected by what they believe; I can say what is the same and what is different between different religions and beliefs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can find out different things about religions and beliefs and I can compare them; I can ask important questions about religions and what people believe; I can describe symbols and use this to say what they might mean for people; I can describe ways people show their religious beliefs and what they might mean. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can say what/who inspires me, how these influence me; I can compare what I think and feel is important to what others think and feel is important; I can give reasons to describe what is important to me; I can compare my reasons with those of others; I can link what people think is important to what they believe and how they behave.
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can see how questions, beliefs, values and actions are linked; I can describe how people's beliefs and actions affect individuals, groups and communities; I can describe similarities and differences within and between religions and beliefs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can research and organise ideas about religions and beliefs; I can ask questions during my research; I can use my research to suggest answers to these questions; I can use correct vocabulary to suggest meanings for different ways in which people show their religious beliefs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can describe how sources of inspiration and influence can make a difference to myself and others; I can use my learning about religions and beliefs and think about how it affects my own life and the lives of others; I can suggest what might happen as a result of my actions and attitudes, and those of others.

5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can explain links between questions, beliefs, values and practices in different world views including religious and non-religious; • I can recognise and explain the impact of beliefs and ultimate questions on individuals and communities; • I can explain how and why differences in beliefs are expressed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can suggest different ways in which I can address questions raised by the study of religions and beliefs; • I can suggest answers to questions raised by the study of religions and beliefs, using sources and evidence; • I can recognise and explain different ways religions express themselves, using appropriate language and ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can express clear views about what inspires and influences me and others. • I can suggest how this makes a difference to my own and others' beliefs; • I can recognise and explain how issues related to religions and beliefs are relevant to me; • I can contribute to discussions and develop arguments about religious viewpoints and beliefs, and the challenges of commitment.
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can use religious and philosophical language and concepts to explain religions, beliefs, practices and values. • I can explain some of the challenges raised and offered by the variety of religions and beliefs in the world; • I can explore the challenge of following a belief system in the world today; • I can explain the reasons for, and effects of, diversity within and between religions, beliefs and cultures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can identify things that influence differences within religions and beliefs; • I can identify and find reasons for different viewpoints; • I can interpret religions and beliefs from different points of view/perspectives; • I can interpret the importance and effect of different forms of religious and spiritual expression. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can argue persuasively my views on questions of religion and belief, taking account of others' viewpoints; • I can express insights of my own into the challenges of committing to a religion or belief; • I can explain the challenges posed by religious, spiritual and philosophical questions. (UQ)
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can analyse issues of religion and belief using a variety of religious and secular ideas and concepts; • I can explain some consequences and influences of religions and beliefs on individuals and communities in an organised and reasoned way; • I can explain some of the influences of history and culture on aspects of religious life and practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can independently enquire into aspects of religions and beliefs, analysing connections, strengths and weaknesses; • I can use a wide range of relevant evidence, examples and sources to explore religious and secular concepts and practices; • I can use a range of methods (e.g. psychology, sociology) used to study religion, to enquire into forms of spiritual and moral expression. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can evaluate religious and secular views on questions of religion and belief and justify my views; • I can express clear and insightful personal responses to questions of belief and moral issues; • I can analyse contrasting viewpoints, including my own and explore strengths and weaknesses taking these into account when giving judgement.
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can use a wide range of language, ideas and methods to analyse and demonstrate a broad understanding of religions and beliefs; • I can interpret religions and beliefs in their historical, social and cultural contexts • I can analyse different interpretations of religious, spiritual and moral sources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can independently research and draw conclusions from my enquiries into a range of arguments about religions and beliefs; • I can analyse the connections between religions and beliefs and other disciplines or areas of human understanding, e.g. scientific enquiry; • I can interpret varied forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression using my understanding of religions or beliefs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can bring together (synthesise) a range of evidence, arguments and reflections to challenge others' ideas and justify my own • I can be creative in how I express and evaluate different responses to questions of belief and moral issues • I can draw balanced conclusions about aspects of religion and belief and present them persuasively to others.

	Attainment Target 1: Learning about religion	Attainment Target 2: Learning from religion
L1	Pupils use some religious words and phrases to recognise and name features of religious life and practice. They can recall religious stories and recognise symbols, and other verbal and visual forms of religious expression.	Pupils talk about their own experiences and feelings, what they find interesting or puzzling and what is of value and concern to themselves and to others.
L2	Pupils use religious words and phrases to identify some features of religion and its importance for some people. They begin to show awareness of similarities in religions. Pupils retell religious stories and suggest meanings for religious actions and symbols. They identify how religion is expressed in different ways.	Pupils ask, and respond sensitively to, questions about their own and others' experiences and feelings. They recognise that some questions cause people to wonder and are difficult to answer. In relation to matters of right and wrong, they recognise their own values and those of others.
L3	Pupils use a developing religious vocabulary to describe some key features of religions, recognising similarities and differences. They make links between beliefs and sources, including religious stories and sacred texts. They begin to identify the impact religion has on believers' lives. They describe some forms of religious expression.	Pupils identify what influences them, making links between aspects of their own and others' experiences. They ask important questions about religion and beliefs, making links between their own and others' responses. They make links between values and commitments, and their own attitudes and behaviour.
L4	Pupils use a developing religious vocabulary to describe and show understanding of sources, practices, beliefs, ideas, feelings and experiences. They make links between them, and describe some similarities and differences both within and between religions. They describe the impact of religion on people's lives. They suggest meanings for a range of forms of religious expression.	Pupils raise, and suggest answers to, questions of identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments. They apply their ideas to their own and other people's lives. They describe what inspires and influences themselves and others.
L5	Pupils use an increasingly wide religious vocabulary to explain the impact of beliefs on individuals and communities. They describe why people belong to religions. They understand that similarities and differences illustrate distinctive beliefs within and between religions and suggest possible reasons for this. They explain how religious sources are used to provide answers to ultimate questions and ethical issues, recognising diversity in forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression, within and between religions.	Pupils ask, and suggest answers to, questions of identity, belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, values and commitments, relating them to their own and others' lives. They explain what inspires and influences them, expressing their own and others' views on the challenges of belonging to a religion.

L6	<p>Pupils use religious and philosophical vocabulary to give informed accounts of religions and beliefs, explaining the reasons for diversity within and between them. They explain why the impact of religions and beliefs on individuals, communities and societies varies. They interpret sources and arguments, explaining the reasons that are used in different ways by different traditions to provide answers to ultimate questions and ethical issues. They interpret the significance of different forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression.</p>	<p>Pupils use reasoning and examples to express insights into the relationship between beliefs, teachings and world issues. They express insights into their own and others' views on questions of identity and belonging, meaning, purpose and truth. They consider the challenges of belonging to a religion in the contemporary world, focusing on values and commitments.</p>
L7	<p>Pupils use a wide religious and philosophical vocabulary to show a coherent understanding of a range of religions and beliefs. They analyse issues, values and questions of meaning and truth. They account for the influence of history and culture on aspects of religious life and practice. They explain why the consequences of belonging to a faith are not the same for all people within the same religion or tradition. They use some of the principal methods by which religion, spirituality and ethics are studied, including the use of a variety of sources, evidence and forms of expression.</p>	<p>Pupils articulate personal and critical responses to questions of meaning, purpose and truth and ethical issues. They evaluate the significance of religious and other views for understanding questions of human relationships, belonging, identity, society, values and commitments, using appropriate evidence and examples.</p>
L8	<p>Pupils use a comprehensive religious and philosophical vocabulary to analyse a range of religions and beliefs. They contextualise interpretations of religion with reference to historical, cultural, social and philosophical ideas. They critically evaluate the impact of religions and beliefs on differing communities and societies. They analyse differing interpretations of religious, spiritual and moral sources, using some of the principal methods by which religion, spirituality and ethics are studied. They interpret and evaluate varied forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression.</p>	<p>Pupils coherently analyse a wide range of viewpoints on questions of identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments. They synthesise a range of evidence, arguments, reflections and examples, fully justifying their own views and ideas and providing a detailed evaluation of the perspectives of others.</p>
EP	<p>Pupils use a complex religious, moral and philosophical vocabulary to provide a consistent and detailed analysis of religions and beliefs. They evaluate in depth the importance of religious diversity in a pluralistic society. They clearly recognise the extent to which the impact of religion and beliefs on different communities and societies has changed over time. They provide a detailed analysis of how religious, spiritual and moral sources are interpreted in different ways, evaluating the principal methods by which religion and spirituality are studied. They synthesise effectively their accounts of the varied forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression.</p>	<p>Pupils analyse in depth a wide range of perspectives on questions of identity and belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, and values and commitments. They give independent, well informed and highly reasoned insights into their own and others' perspectives on religious and spiritual issues, providing well- substantiated and balanced conclusions.</p>

A6.1 Skills and attitudes in Religious Education

Skills

Progress in RE is dependent upon the application of general educational skills and processes, which in turn will be strengthened through this application. The following skills are central to RE and should be reflected in planning, task-setting, learning experiences and progression.

Enquiry - this includes:

- asking relevant questions;
- knowing how to use different types of sources, including ICT, as a way of gathering information;
- knowing what may constitute evidence for understanding religion(s).

Reflection - this includes:

- looking thoughtfully at an idea, practice or experience to see what we can learn from it;
- the ability to ask appropriate questions to further understanding;
- the ability to think carefully about the material being explored;
- the ability to reflect on feelings, relationships, experience, ultimate questions, beliefs and practices.

Empathy - this includes:

- the ability to consider the thoughts, feelings, experiences, attitudes, beliefs and values of others;
- developing the power of imagination to identify feelings such as love, wonder, forgiveness and sorrow;
- the ability to see the world through the eyes of others, and to see issues from their point of view.

Expression - this includes:

- the ability to describe concepts, rituals and practices so that others can know about them;
- the ability to explain rituals, beliefs and concepts so that others can understand them;

- the ability to express religious views, and respond to religious questions through a variety of media.

Interpretation - this includes:

- the ability to draw meanings from rituals, artefacts, works of art, poetry and symbolism;
- the ability to interpret religious language;
- the ability to suggest meanings of religious texts.

Evaluation - this includes:

- the ability to debate issues of religious significance with reference to evidence and argument;
- the ability to identify and assess relative strengths and weaknesses in different viewpoints.

Analysis - this includes:

- distinguishing between opinion, belief and fact;
- distinguishing between the features of different religions and groups within religions.

Synthesis - this includes:

- linking significant features of religion together in a coherent pattern;
- connecting different aspects of life into a meaningful whole.

Application - this includes:

- making the association between religions and individual, community, national and global life;
- applying the beliefs, values and practices explored to their own beliefs and experience.

Attitudes

While the knowledge, skills and understanding are central to the Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus, it is also vital that Religious Education encourages pupils to develop positive attitudes to their learning and to the beliefs and values of others. The following four attitudes are essential for good learning in Religious Education and should be developed at each Key Stage:

Self-awareness in religious education includes pupils:

- feeling confident about their own beliefs and identity and sharing them without fear of embarrassment or ridicule;
- developing a realistic and positive sense of their own religious, moral and spiritual ideas;
- recognising their own uniqueness as human beings and affirming their self-worth;
- becoming increasingly sensitive to the impact of their ideas and behaviour on other people;
- developing an increasingly coherent self-concept in relation to ideas and beliefs around what it means to be a person.

Respect for all in religious education includes pupils:

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

Open-mindedness in religious education includes pupils:

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

Appreciation and wonder in religious education includes pupils:

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

Promoting spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through religious education

Religious education provides opportunities to promote **spiritual development** through:

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

Religious education provides opportunities to promote **moral development** through:

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

Religious education provides opportunities to promote **social development** through:

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

Religious education provides opportunities to promote **cultural development** through:

- encountering people, literature, the creative and expressive arts and resources from differing cultures
- considering the relationship between religion and cultures and how religions and beliefs contribute to cultural identity and practices

- promoting racial and 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

Promoting citizenship through religious education

Religious education plays a significant part in promoting *citizenship* through:

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

Promoting other aspects of the curriculum

Religious education provides opportunities to promote:

- **thinking skills** through helping pupils to research, select, interpret and analyse information from religious traditions, reflect and question their own views and ideas and those of others and communicate their ideas in a variety of ways **It develops pupils' ability to understand, analyse, relate to and apply concepts to do with meaning, purpose, values and truth**
- **financial capability** through considering the responsible use of money, the importance of giving and the ethics of wealth, debt, poverty, gambling, business and investment
- **creativity and culture** through considering the scope of human nature, sources of inspiration and discovery, connections between beliefs, values and forms of artistic expression, appreciating the value of cultural distinctiveness and reflecting on beauty, goodness and truth in creative and expressive arts
- **education for racial equality and community cohesion** through studying the damaging effects of xenophobia and racial stereotyping, the impact of conflict in religion and the promotion of respect, understanding and cooperation through dialogue between people of different faiths and beliefs
- **effective contributions to scientific, medical and health issues** through exploring philosophical and ethical questions of the origin, purpose and destiny of the cosmos and life within it, exploring the nature of humanity and human interaction with the world, exploring developments in genetics and medicine and their application and use and exploring concepts of health and well-being and their promotion
- **links to employment, vocations and work-related learning** through a focus on individual sense of purpose and aspiration in life, and through considering the appropriateness and relevance of religious education to a wide range of employment opportunities and the development of spiritual and ethical issues linked to the world of work
- **education for sustainable development** through helping pupils consider the origins and value of life, the importance of looking after the environment and studying the ways in which religious beliefs and teachings have influenced attitudes to the environment and other species.

KS1	1. Believing	2. Story	3. Celebrations	4. Symbols	5. Leaders & Teachers	6. Belonging	7. Myself
CHRISTIANITY	One God, Father, Creator, Jesus Christ, Son of God, Holy Spirit	Old Testament stories Stories of Jesus' birth Stories Jesus told	Sunday Harvest Advent Christmas Epiphany Easter Weddings	Bible, cross Candle, Chalice & paten Bread & wine, Icons	Jesus Christ Clergy	Baptism/ Dedication Church as community	The Christian Family Prayer Making a difference
ISLAM	One God Allah Creator Muhammad, the Messenger	Stories of Muhammad	Ramadan / Eid-UI-Fitr Hajj/Eid-UI-Adha Weddings	Qur'an Subhah (beads) Qiblah (compass) prayer mat Head covering Modest dress	Muhammad Muslim clerics	Naming Ceremony Call to prayer Mosque Ummah (Muslim community)	The Muslim Family Prayer Making a difference
JUDAISM	One God Creator Covenant God given Torah	Stories from the Torah (5 Books of Moses), Abraham, Joseph, Moses	Shabbat Sukkot Hanukkah Pesach Weddings	Sefer Torah (Torah Scroll) Tallit (prayer shawl) Kippah (head covering) Mezuzah Menorah / Hanukiah	Patriarchs and Matriarchs including Abraham Moses Rabbis	Synagogue The people of Israel	The Jewish Family Prayer Making a difference

KS2	Beliefs and Questions	Teachings and Authority	Worship, Pilgrimage and Sacred Places	Journey of Life and Death	Symbols and Religious Expression	Inspirational People	Religion and the Individual	Religion, Family and Community	Beliefs in Action
CHRISTIANITY	One God Creator, Father, Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour, Holy Spirit Good and Evil	Bible: Old and New Testaments	Church Pilgrimage sites Holy Communion	Baptism Dedication Confirmation Weddings Death & the afterlife	Pentecost Visual Symbols, Symbolic titles given to Jesus Art, Music and Architecture	Jesus' early life, ministry, death, resurrection, ascension Peter Paul Modern day examples	Ten Commandments Jesus' teaching on Commandments Jesus' parables	Clergy Personal Bible study, family prayer, service to others, Modern monastic community	Fairtrade Christian Aid Tear Fund Cafod Stewardship
ISLAM	God – Allah Creator Muhammad, the Messenger Good and Evil	Qur'an Hadith	Ramadan / Eid- Ul-Fitr / Hajj / Eid-UI- Adha Makkah Medina Mosque	Adhan / Aqiqah (Naming Ceremony) Weddings Death and the afterlife	Five Pillars Art and Architecture	Muhammad Prophets Khalifah Modern day examples	Five Pillars Sunnah Dietary Laws Modest dress	Imam Family prayer Service to others Ummah	Zakat (charity) Islamic Aid Khalifah Khilafah
JUDAISM	God Creator Covenant God given Torah Messiah	The Law Ten Command- ments Justice and Forgiveness	Synagogue Jerusalem (Western Wall)	Bar / Bat Mitzvah Weddings Burials and rituals of mourning (sitting shivah) The value of life	Aron Hakodesh Torah Mezuzah Tefillin Tallit Art, Music and Architecture	Abraham Moses Modern day examples	Ten Commandments Mitzvot – good deeds Daily prayer Dietary Laws Blessings Rosh Hashanah Yom Kippur	Rabbi Shabbat Passover Purim Shavuot	Tzedakah (charity / justice) Shemittah (Environ- ment)
HINDUISM	One God, (Brahman) many aspects Atman Creation Preservation Destruction Good and Evil	The Vedas The Bhagavad Gita Ramayana	Shrine Temple Puja Ganges Varanasi (Benares) Divali Holi Kumbhamela	Namakaran (Naming) Upanayana (Sacred Thread) Raksha Bandhan (family) Weddings Death and the afterlife	Aum Murtis (representatio n s) Puja Tray Art, Music and Architecture	Gurus Rama, Krishna Sita Modern day examples	Sanatanadharma Karma Dharma Self discipline	Priest Guru Puja Shrine Temple	Karma Dharma Ahimsa

KS3	Beliefs and Concepts	Authority	Religion and Science	Expressions of Spirituality	Ethics and Relationships	Rights and Responsibilities	Global Issues	Interfaith Dialogue
BUDDHISM	Buddha Noble Eightfold Path Four Noble Truths Karma/Samsara Reincarnation	Buddha Dhamma (teachings) Sangha (Triratna) Teachers, e.g. Tibetan Lamas Personal Experience	Wheel of life anicca anatta dukkha Conditioned Arising	Diversity of corporate worship, e.g. Buddha image and shrine, Wesak, pilgrimage Diversity of private worship, e.g. meditation, prayer, chanting	Suffering Compassion (Karuna) Middle Way Five Precepts	Right livelihood action, speech Engaged Buddhism Dana (Alms) Sangha Metta Project Dalai Lama	Right livelihood Animal welfare Samye Ling Conservation project Ahimsa	Inter-dependence
CHRISTIANITY	Trinity, Incarnation, Resurrection, Atonement, Salvation, Soul	Bible Revelation, Conscience, Reason, the Church's authority	Creation, Design, First Cause arguments, experiential argument	Diversity of corporate worship, e.g. across denominations, Diversity of private worship, including meditation and prayer	Agape, Forgiveness, Equality, The Lord's Prayer	Desmond Tutu, Martin Luther King, Trevor Huddleston, Mother Teresa	Pacifism, Just War, stewardship, aid issues, liberation theology	Corrymeela, Taizé Evangelism, Jerusalem, Local interfaith dialogue, e.g. Oxford Round Table of religions
HINDUISM	Brahman, Atman, Samsara, Moksha, Dharma Karma, Artha, Reincarnation	Smirti Shruti Gurus (e.g. Sai Baba) Krishnamurthi Ramakrishna	Creation, Evolution, Atomic theory, Great elements (5 elements)	Diversity of corporate worship, Diversity of private worship, e.g. puja, meditation, the 3 paths, Sannyasin Hare Krishna	Dharma Karma Manu's laws Seek the truth, act righteously	Gandhi Ahimsa Duties to yourself, family and society, caste, ashramas or stages in life	Satyagraha Ahimsa Chipko movement	Local groups, e.g. Oxford Round Table Views about other religions Inter-community celebrations
ISLAM	Tawhid, Creation, Shirk, Prophethood, Judgement	Qur'an Revelation, Sunnah, Shia authority, Reason	Creation, Kalam argument, reason	Diversity of corporate worship, e.g. zikr, hajj Diversity of private worship, e.g. rakat Dervish, Shi'ite	Submission Purity, Equality, Greater Jihad	Justice, Community Ummah Jammah	Jihad (struggle) Khalifah Zakat, Sadaqah,	Religions of the Book, Ibrahim, Isa, Islamophobia / Westophobia Da'wah, Jerusalem

JUDAISM	God Israel Covenant God-given Torah	Tanakh Torah, Prophets, Writings Talmud	Creation	Diversity of corporate worship, e.g. Shabbat, Yom ha Shoah and across denominations Diversity of private worship, e.g. Jewish Mysticism	Yom Kippur, Purity, Preservation of Life, Rosh Hashanah	Social Justice Tzedakah	Tikkun Olam (repair of the world)	Jerusalem, Covenant, Abraham, Messiah Anti-Semitism
SIKHISM	God Gurmukh Manmukh Guru	Guru Granth Sahib, Gurus Khalsa	Creation and active God Karma – cause and effect (sukh – happiness dukh – unhappiness)	Corporate and individual worship, e.g. Akhand Path, Nit Nem kirtan, prayer	Sewa Equality, e.g. gender, caste, race, disability, rich and poor	Langar Faith and Community Justice Human Rights Khalsa Aid	Fighting discrimination Human rights Environment Diaspora	Guru Tegh Bahadur Universality of Guru Granth Sahib Design of Golden Temple Guru Arjan