



Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education in Suffolk 2012





The Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education in Suffolk

The Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education in Suffolk contains the requirements for religious education as laid down in the relevant Education acts. It highlights some of the features which make religious education important, and demonstrates how it can support the values and aims of the school curriculum. The Syllabus also demonstrates clearly how religious education contributes to learning across the curriculum and to the general teaching requirements of the national curriculum

It constitutes the statutory curriculum for religious education in maintained schools in Suffolk with effect from 1 January 2013. It details the aims of the syllabus and the attitudes to be encouraged. It sets out the programmes of study, attainment targets and level descriptions which teachers should use in devising their own school scheme of work for religious education



Buddhism



Christianity



Hinduism



Humanism



Islam



Judaism



Sikhism

Suffolk Agreed Syllabus 2012

Foreword

Every pupil in maintained schools has an entitlement to religious education and I am very pleased to introduce the revised Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education in Suffolk. It becomes statutory for all maintained schools in Suffolk from January 2013.

Religious education provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. This revised agreed syllabus develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, religious traditions and world views that can provide questions and stimulate discussion to consider answers to such questions.

The revised syllabus has been updated to reflect changes such as academies and free schools. The differences from the previous syllabus are minimal due to the wider review of the national curriculum which is likely to have an impact on the national and local frameworks for provision in RE. It does however, have additional, non- statutory resources which will help teachers provide stimulating learning in RE.

I believe the revised syllabus will be the vehicle for delivering good quality religious education which can transform pupils' assessment of themselves and others, and their understanding of the wider position of the world in which we live.

My thanks to the members of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) and the colleagues in schools who have worked to produce this new document.

With the renewed focus from Ofsted on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development I look forward to hearing about the implementation of this challenging agenda and the extent to which RE is contributing to this important aspect of young people's learning.

Graham Newman
Cabinet Member for Education and Young People
2012

“RE is everywhere in our school, well more than that really.... in RE there are no walls....”

Year 7 student

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The Framework for the Agreed Syllabus

The Context for the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus

In preparing this revised Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education, Suffolk Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) took into account the four purposes of the national curriculum, and set out to:

- ***Establish an entitlement to religious education***

All pupils in Suffolk schools, irrespective of social background, culture, race, religion, gender, differences in ability and disabilities, have an entitlement to learning in religious education. The Suffolk Agreed Syllabus contributes to the developing knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes necessary for their self-fulfillment and growth as active and responsible citizens. It is expected that few, if any, parents will wish to withdraw their children from this entitlement.

- ***Establish standards in religious education***

The Agreed Syllabus sets out explicit expectations for learning and attainment to pupils, parents, teachers, governors, employers and the public. It establishes standards for the performance of all pupils in religious education that may be used to measure progress and set targets for improvement.

- ***Promote continuity and coherence in religious education***

The Agreed Syllabus seeks to contribute to a coherent curriculum that promotes continuity. It facilitates the transition of pupils between schools and between phases of education by setting out clear requirements for all concerned. It provides foundations for further study and for lifelong learning.

- ***Promote public understanding of religious education***

Through the Agreed Syllabus SACRE wishes to increase public understanding of, and confidence in, the work of schools throughout Suffolk in religious education. They also hope to encourage others to participate in enriching the process of providing religious education.



Statutory Requirements for the Provision of Religious Education

Primary legislation passed with regard to religious education between 1944 and 1993, including the 1988 Education Reform Act, was consolidated by the 1996 Education Act and the 1998 School Standards and Framework Act.

The legal requirements are that:

1. Religious education must be provided for all registered pupils in full time education except those withdrawn at their parents' request. [S352 (1) (a)]
 - The law relating to religious education for pupils who are not yet in Key Stage 1 is different from that relating to subjects of the national curriculum. As religious education must be taught to 'all registered pupils at the school', it includes pupils in reception classes, but not those in nursery classes or play groups.
 - By the same law, religious education must be provided for all students in school sixth forms (but not those in sixth form colleges, which must provide religious education for all students wishing to receive it).
 - Special schools must comply with this requirement by ensuring that every pupil receives religious education as far as is practicable.
2. Religious education must be taught in accordance with an agreed syllabus in community schools, foundation schools and voluntary controlled schools
 - In 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.
 - In 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. A governing body may accept a recommendation from their diocese to adopt the locally agreed syllabus.
3. Academies, city technology colleges and free schools are required to provide RE and collective worship and do so under the terms of their funding agreement with the Secretary of State. The type of RE specified in the funding agreement depends on whether or not the academy, city technology college or free school has a religious designation and in the case of schools which are 'converter' academies, on whether the predecessor school was a voluntary controlled faith school or a foundation faith school.
 - The funding agreement for a non-faith academy states that they must arrange for RE to be given to all pupils in accordance with the requirements for agreed syllabuses that are set out in the relevant legislation. This means a syllabus that reflects the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main, Christian whilst taking into account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. It also means that these academies must not provide RE to pupils by means of any catechism or formulary which is distinctive of any particular religious denomination.

- There is no requirement for an academy, city technology college or free school to adopt the locally agreed syllabus used in the LA's maintained schools. However, for those schools without a religious character it is good practice and government recommendation for these schools to use the principles of the locally agreed syllabus for their RE.
 - For denominational academies with a religious character (Church of England or Roman Catholic – but also Muslim and most Jewish academies), the religious education curriculum will be in line with the denominational syllabus. These academies may, in addition, provide RE that is in line with the locally agreed syllabus and teach about other faiths if they choose.
4. A locally agreed 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'.
[1996 Act, Ch 56 S375 (3)]
 5. In schools where an agreed syllabus applies, religious education must be nondenominational, but teaching about denominational differences is permitted.
[Education Act 1944 S26 (2)]
 6. The headteacher, along with the governing body and the local authority, is responsible for the provision of religious education in foundation and community maintained schools and in voluntary controlled schools.



Reporting on pupils' progress and attainment

Schools are required to provide an annual report for parents on the attainment and progress of each child in religious education, as for other subjects of the curriculum.

Withdrawal from Religious Education

Pupils – a parent of a pupil may request:

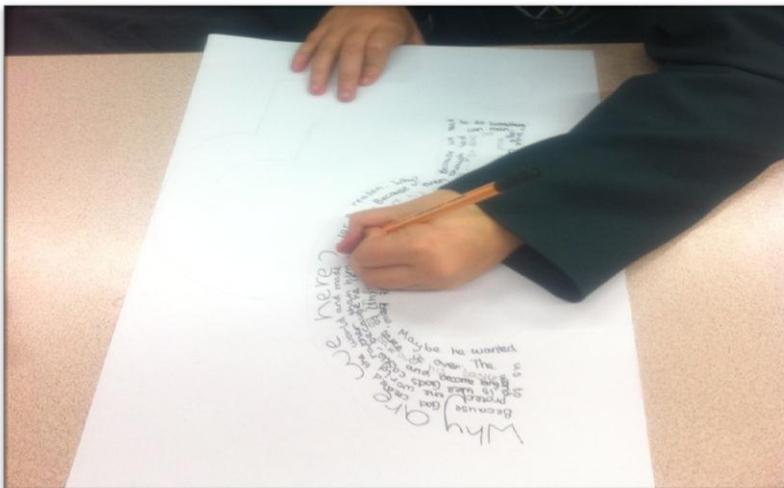
- that their child be wholly or partly excused from receiving religious education given in accordance with the agreed syllabus.
- that a pupil who is wholly or partly excused from receiving religious education provided by the school may receive religious education of the kind desired by the parent elsewhere, provided that it will not interfere with the attendance of the pupil on any day except at the beginning or end of a school session.
- that a pupil who is wholly or partly excused from receiving religious education provided by the school may receive religious education of the kind desired by the parent on the school premises provided that it does not entail any expenditure by the responsible authority.

Teachers – a teacher may not be:

- required to teach religious education (although this may not be the case in a school with a religious foundation).
- discriminated against for their religious opinions or practices.

In Suffolk, religious education meets legal requirements where it implements the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus 2012. This becomes statutory for all community and voluntary controlled schools with effect from January 2013.

These schools are not free to plan or teach religious education from any basis other than the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus.



"Sometimes big questions don't have answers and you are just left with your opinions"

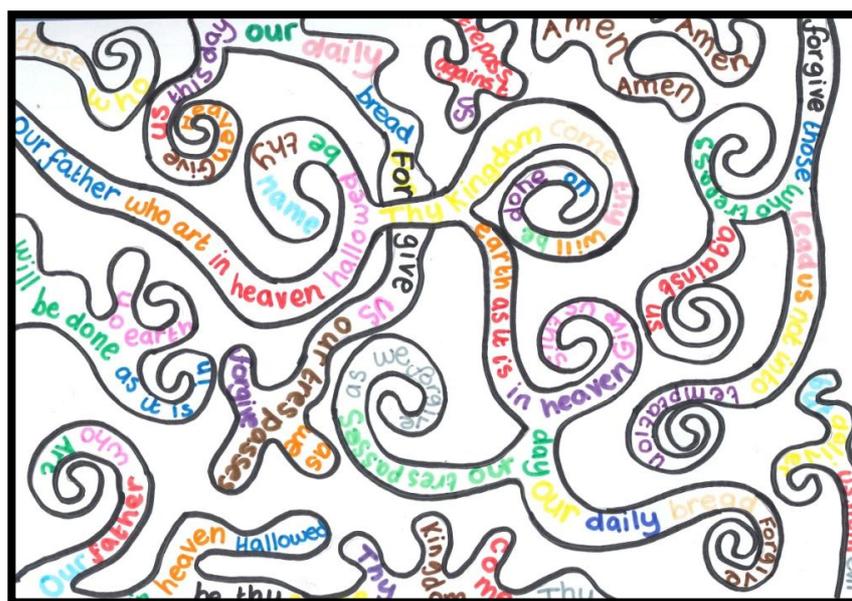
Year 5 student

Schools should have procedures in place to facilitate such withdrawals when required.

The Importance of Religious Education

Religious education should:

- provoke challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human
- develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions and world-views, which offer answers to such questions
- develop pupils' awareness and understanding of religious beliefs, teachings, practices, forms of expression and the influence of religion on individuals, families, communities and cultures
- encourage pupils to learn from the diversity of different religions, beliefs, values and traditions whilst affirming their own faith or search for meaning
- challenge pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses
- encourage pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging and enable them to flourish individually within their communities, as citizens in a pluralistic society and global community
- play an important role in preparing pupils for adult life and employment, enabling them to develop respect and sensitivity to others, in particular those with different faiths and beliefs, and to combat prejudice and negative discrimination.



Religious Education and the School Curriculum

*Religious education supports the **values** of the school curriculum*

Religious education actively promotes the values of truth, justice, respect for all and care of the environment. It places specific emphasis on pupils valuing themselves and others, on the role of the family and the community in religious belief and activity, on the celebration of diversity in society through understanding similarities and differences, and on human stewardship of the earth.

Religious education also recognises the changing nature of society, including changes in religious practice and expression and the influence of religion, in the local, national and global community.



*Religious education supports the **aims** of the school curriculum*

Aim 1 The school curriculum should aim to provide opportunities for all pupils to learn and achieve.

Religious education provides opportunities for the development of knowledge, skills and understanding which stimulate pupils' interest and enjoyment in learning and encourage the best possible progress and attainment for all. It develops both independent and inter-dependent learning and makes an important contribution to pupils' skills in literacy and in information and communication technology. It promotes an enquiring approach in which pupils are able to consider carefully issues of truth in religion. It develops the capacity to think coherently and consistently, enabling them to evaluate their own views, and those of others, in a reasoned and informed manner.

Aim 2 The school curriculum should aim to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

Religious education has a significant role in the promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. At its heart lies a commitment to focus on ultimate questions and ethical issues. This enables pupils to appreciate their own and others' beliefs and cultures and how these impact on individuals, communities, societies and cultures. It seeks to develop pupils' awareness of themselves and others, enabling them to develop a clear understanding of the significance of religion in their own area as well as in the world today. It also enables pupils to learn about the ways different faith communities relate to each other and to society as a whole.

Religious education aims to promote religious understanding and respect, and to challenge prejudice, discrimination and simplistic stereotyping. It is concerned with the promotion of each pupil's self-worth, enabling them to reflect on their uniqueness as human beings, to share their feelings and emotions with others and to appreciate the importance of forming and maintaining positive relationships. It is also committed to exploring the significance of humanity in relation to the environment, and the beliefs people hold about their responsibility towards it.

Attitudes in Religious Education

While knowledge, skills and understanding are central to religious education, it is also vital that pupils are encouraged 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 need to be consistently developed at each key stage:

Self-awareness *in religious education, this includes pupils:*

- feeling confident about their own beliefs and identity and sharing them without fear of embarrassment or ridicule
- developing a realistic, 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.

Respect *for all in religious education, this includes pupils:*

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

Open-mindedness *in religious education, this includes pupils:*

- being willing to learn and gain new understanding
- engaging in argument about religious, moral or spiritual questions, while being able to disagree reasonably and respectfully and without belittling or abusing others
- 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, this includes pupils:*

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

“This lesson made me look at myself in a different way and showed me that I am a wonderful person”
Year 7 student

The Contribution of Religious Education to Learning across the Curriculum

This section sets out in general terms, as do the national curriculum handbooks for other subjects, how religious education promotes learning across the curriculum in the following areas:

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 which 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, the natural world, and God
- valuing relationships and developing a sense of belonging
- developing their own views and ideas on religious and spiritual issues.

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 on moral choices of family, friends and media 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.



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

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 religion and beliefs contribute to cultural identity and practices
- promoting racial and inter-faith harmony and respect for all, combating prejudice and discrimination, contributing positively to community cohesion and promoting awareness of how inter-faith co-operation can support the pursuit of the common good.

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 personal, social and health education through religious education

Religious education plays a significant part in promoting personal, social and health education through pupils:

- developing confidence and responsibility and making the most of their abilities by learning about what is fair and unfair, right and wrong, and being encouraged to share their opinions
- developing a healthy, safer lifestyle by learning about religious beliefs and teachings on drug use and misuse, food and drink, leisure, relationships and human sexuality, the purpose and value of religious beliefs and sensitivities in relation to sex education and enabling pupils to consider and express their own views

- developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people by learning about the diversity of different ethnic and religious groups and the destructive power of prejudice, challenging racism, discrimination, offending behaviour and bullying, being able to talk about relationships and feelings, considering issues of marriage and family life and meeting and encountering people whose beliefs, views and lifestyles are different from their own.

Promoting key skills through religious education

Religious education provides opportunities for pupils to develop the key skills of:

- **communication** through developing a broad and accurate religious vocabulary, reading and responding to a range of written and spoken language, including sacred texts, stories, poetry, prayers, liturgy and worship, communicating ideas using the creative and expressive arts, talking and writing with understanding and insight about religious and other beliefs and values, reflecting critically on ultimate questions of life, using reasoned arguments.
- **application of number** through calendrical reckoning, collecting, recording, presenting and interpreting data, involving graphs, charts and statistical analysis.
- **information and communication technology (ICT)** through using the internet and media selectively, researching information about religion and belief, teaching and practices, using email to communicate and analyse information with people of differing beliefs and cultures, using spreadsheets and databases to handle and present data relevant to the study of religious education.
- **working with others** through sharing ideas and discussing beliefs, values and practices, collaborating with each other and developing respect and sensitivity.
- **improving own learning and performance** through setting targets as part of religious education development, reviewing their achievements and identifying ways to improve their own work.
- **problem solving** through recognising key issues to do with religious belief, practice and expression, interpreting and explaining findings, making personal decisions on religious issues (for example, considering their own and religious ideas on good and evil), ethical dilemmas and priorities in life.

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.
- **financial capability** through considering the responsible use of money, the importance of giving and the ethics of wealth, debt, poverty, gambling, business and investment.



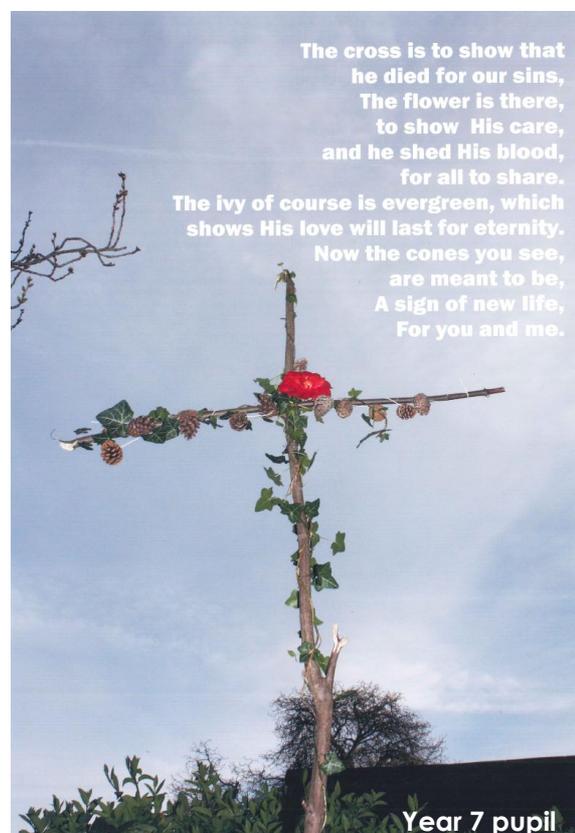
- **creativity and culture** through considering the scope of human nature, sources of inspiration and discovery, connections between beliefs, values and forms of artistic expression, appreciating the value of cultural distinctiveness and reflecting on beauty, goodness and truth in creative and expressive 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 co-operation through dialogue between people of different faiths and beliefs.

- **effective contributions to scientific, medical and health issues** through exploring, for example, philosophical and ethical questions of the origin, purpose and destiny of the cosmos and life within it, the nature of humanity and human interaction with the world, developments in genetics and medicine and their application and use, 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.



Religious Education and the General Teaching Requirements

Religious education contributes to the general teaching requirements of the national curriculum. It has particular contributions to make to the following areas.

Religious education and inclusion

Religious education can make a significant contribution to inclusion, particularly in its focus on promoting respect for all. The Suffolk Agreed Syllabus contains many references to the role of religious education in challenging stereotypical views and appreciating, positively, differences in others. It enables all pupils to consider the impact of people's beliefs on their own actions and lifestyle. The syllabus also highlights the importance of religion and belief and how religious education can develop pupils' self-esteem.

Effective inclusion involves teaching a lively, stimulating religious education curriculum that:

- builds on and is enriched by the differing experiences pupils bring to religious education
- meets all pupils' learning needs, including those with learning difficulties or who are gifted and talented, boys and girls, pupils for whom English is an additional language, pupils from all religious communities and pupils from a wide range of ethnic groups and diverse family backgrounds.

To overcome any potential barriers to learning in religious education, some pupils may require:

- support to access text, such as through prepared tapes, particularly when working with significant quantities of written materials or at speed
- help to communicate their ideas through methods other than extended writing, where this is a requirement. For example, pupils may demonstrate their understanding through speech or the use of ICT
- a non-visual way of accessing sources of information when undertaking research in aspects of Religious Education, for example, using audio materials.

Religious education and the use of language

Religious education can make an important contribution to pupils' use of language by enabling them to:

- acquire and develop a specialist vocabulary
- communicate their ideas with depth and precision
- listen to the views and ideas of others, including people from religious traditions
- be enthused about the power and beauty of language, recognising its limitations
- develop their speaking and listening skills when considering religions, beliefs and ideas and articulating their responses
- read, particularly from sacred texts
- write in different styles, such as poetry, diaries, extended writing and the synthesis of differing views, beliefs and ideas
- evaluate clearly and rationally, using a range of reasoned, balanced arguments.

Religious education and the use of information and communication technology

Religious education can make an important contribution to pupils' use of ICT by enabling them to:

- make appropriate use of the Internet or CD-ROM sources to investigate, analyse and evaluate different aspects of religious beliefs and practices, ultimate questions and ethical issues
- use email or videoconferencing to communicate and collaborate with individuals in different locations enabling associations to be made between religions and individual, national and international life
- use multimedia and presentation software to communicate a personal response, the essence of an argument or a stimulus for discussion
- use writing-support and concept-mapping software to organise thoughts and communicate knowledge and understanding of the diversity of belief and practice within and between religious traditions
- use equipment such as digital cameras and digital video to bring authentic images into the classroom to support discussion and reflection, and to enhance understanding of the impact of religious beliefs and practices on the lives of local individuals and faith communities.



The Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education in Suffolk

Aims in Religious Education

Religious education in Suffolk should provide pupils with opportunities to:

Learn about religion and belief

- acquiring knowledge and developing understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions represented in Great Britain
- developing an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures, and of how religion can influence the lives of people who embrace it
- developing the ability to consider and reflect on religious and moral issues in order to make informed choices in the context of a growing knowledge of the teachings of the principal religions represented in Great Britain.

and

Learn from religion and belief

- developing awareness of the fundamental questions of life raised by human experiences, and of how religious teachings can relate to them
- responding to such questions with reference to the teachings and practices of religions, and to their own understanding and experience
- reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study.

These twin aims will:

- help pupils develop a positive attitude towards other people, respecting their right to hold beliefs different from their own, and towards living in a society of diverse religion and belief
- enhance their spiritual, moral, cultural and social development.

These twin aims are reflected in the attainment targets and level descriptions.



Learning about Religion and Belief - a bit like a window through which teacher and pupils look from the 'safety' of their classroom at people practising their religion and then explore what is happening and why.



Learning from Religion and Belief - a bit like a mirror in which teacher and pupils see themselves and maybe their friends' faces too. It is a chance to evaluate different religious practices or beliefs and ask questions or express their own developing ideas.

Foundation Stage Entitlement

Introduction

The foundation stage describes the phase of a child's education from the age of three to the end of the reception year at five. It is statutory for all registered pupils on the school roll to receive religious education in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus, including those pupils in reception classes.

The statutory requirement does not extend to nursery classes in maintained schools.

The contribution of religious education to the early learning goals

The early learning goals set out what most children should achieve by the end of the foundation stage.

The areas of learning and development in Early Years Foundation Stage

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years' settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These three areas, the prime areas, are:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development.



Providers must also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design.

Educational programmes must involve activities and experiences for children, as follows.

- **Communication and language development** involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

- **Physical development** involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

- **Personal, social and emotional development** involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

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

Religious education can enrich children's experience and understanding by making an active contribution to the planning and teaching of all these areas. Indeed, knowledge of religions, beliefs and cultures is vital to achieve some of the early learning goals.

Religious education has a particularly important contribution to make to: personal, social and emotional development; communication and literacy; knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development.

In order to support continuity and progression the programme of study for the foundation stage has been organised into the two attainment targets, learning about and Learning from religion and belief. It is recognised that foundation stage practitioners organise learning experiences around the early learning goals, and the programme of study is set out in line with the early learning goals in the guidance papers. (Non-statutory Curriculum Guidance for Religious Education in Suffolk Schools 2012 shows how religious education can contribute to the areas of learning)

Religious education for children in reception classes

The programme of study for reception class children is in line with the early learning goals and consistent with the Key Stage 1 religious education curriculum. It is based on religious material which most children in Suffolk encounter and the experiences they have as they begin school. Its inclusion in the curriculum helps them make sense of their environment.

Schools need to devise ways to incorporate the religious education entitlement for reception children into their curriculum and establish the best model for delivery. They should be able to identify, quantify and evaluate the religious education provided during this time. As with the idea of working towards the literacy hour and the daily mathematics lesson during reception year, it may help to create specific religious education time².

The Suffolk Agreed Syllabus recommends the equivalent of 30 minutes per week of religious education for reception children. Many schools incorporate the time allocation to create themed days or extended projects where RE is the main focus.

¹ Evaluation will also provide evidence when assessing Early Learning Goals.

² Parents who wish to withdraw their children from religious education will probably first make this known to the school during the child's time in the reception class. Specific religious education time may be helpful on the few occasions where a school has to implement the withdrawal clause

Programme of Study for the Foundation Stage

During the foundation stage children begin to explore the world of religion in terms of special people, books, times, places and objects, and by visiting places of worship. Children listen to and talk about religious stories. They are introduced to specialist words and use their senses in exploring religious beliefs, practices and forms of expression. They reflect on their own feelings and experiences. They use their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation of, and wonder at, the world in which they live.

Knowledge, skills and understanding

Learning about religion and belief

Pupils should be taught to:

- talk about aspects of some religious stories, including Bible stories and the stories behind Christmas and Easter, e.g. saying what they like about them
- recognise simple religious beliefs or teachings e.g. love your neighbour, God is great
- identify simple features of religious life and practice in a family context e.g. saying family prayers, naming a baby or celebrating a festival
- recognise a number of religious words e.g. religion, pray, church, amen, saint, and in particular, understand the use of the word 'God' in a religious context
- name the cross as a Christian symbol and recognise some other religious symbols or symbolic clothing e.g. Jewish kippah, Sikh turban
- recognise some Christian religious artefacts, including those in cultural as well as religious use e.g. Christmas cards, Easter eggs, hot cross buns.

Learning from religion and belief

Pupils should be taught to:

- recognise aspects of their own experiences and feelings in religious stories and celebrations
- recognise there are both similarities and differences between their own lives and those of other children, including those from religious backgrounds
- identify what they find interesting or puzzling about religious events
- ask questions about puzzling things in religious stories or in the natural world
- say what matters or is of value to them and talk about how to care for and respect things that people value
- talk about what concerns them about different ways of behaving e.g. being kind and helpful, being unfair or mean.

Breadth of study

During the foundation stage pupils should be taught the knowledge, skills and understanding through the following:

Religion and belief

- introducing Christianity as the 'heritage religion' of the country and the one that most influences school and community life
- building on religions represented among the pupils e.g. different Christian denominations or the major world religions, so the experiences and interests of children can be used as starting points for learning and teaching
- sampling from major world religions, outside the children's experience, in order to extend their knowledge and understanding.

Learning themes

No learning themes are specified for the foundation stage although teachers may wish to develop their own learning themes, around for example, special people, books, times, places, objects and stories:

Experiences and opportunities:

- handling a range of religious materials and artefacts that can be accessed through sight, touch, sound and smell
- using imaginative play activities that promote understanding of religious traditions and language, including the use of artefacts from different religions, where appropriate, e.g. clothes, badges, symbols, candles, toys
- encountering positive images of different religions through the enjoyment of stories, music, art, puppets, dance, food, visits, pictures and videos
- meeting appropriate visitors from local Christian and other religious communities who can share a child's-eye view of growing up in a religion
- making visits to churches, and other places of worship where possible, to meet people, hear stories and look at artefacts
- gaining understanding of being part of a larger community by taking part in school events and celebrations
- participating in moments of quiet reflection and physical stillness e.g. lying under trees outside, before or after stories, watching a candle flame, listening to music.



Teaching Requirements for Key Stages 1 – 3

The following pages explain the structure of the teaching requirements for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3. Although there is a separate programme of study for each key stage, they are structured in the same way to help provide continuity and progression for pupils.

The programmes of study contain:

Knowledge, skills and understanding

The development of knowledge, skills and understanding focuses on two key aspects of learning in religious education:

- **Learning about religion and belief** – includes enquiry into, and investigation of, the nature of religion, its beliefs, teachings, ways of life, sources, practices and forms of expression. It includes the skills of interpretation, analysis and explanation. It also includes identifying and developing an understanding of ultimate questions and ethical issues. Learning about religion and belief covers knowledge and understanding of individual religions and how they relate to each other as well as the study of the nature and characteristics of religion. Pupils learn to communicate their knowledge and understanding using specialist vocabulary.
- **Learning from religion and belief** – is concerned with developing pupils' ability to reflect on, and respond to, their own and others' experiences in the light of their Learning about religion and belief. It develops pupils' skills of application, interpretation and evaluation of what they learn about religion. Pupils learn to develop and communicate their own ideas, in relation to questions of identity and belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, and values and commitments.

Breadth of study

The knowledge, skills and understanding are taught through the three elements of the breadth of study.

Religion and belief

In accordance with national legislation and to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus requires that:

- Christianity should be studied in depth at each key stage to 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian' (Education Act 1988)
- other principal religions represented in Great Britain (usually regarded as Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism) should be studied across the key stages; although they do not have to be studied at equal depth, nor all of them in each key stage
- other religious traditions (such as the Baha'i faith, Jainism or Zoroastrianism) may be studied if appropriate, particularly where they are represented locally
- secular philosophies such as Humanism should be studied.

Exact requirements for teaching about which religions, when, and at what depth, are given in the programme of study for each key stage. Schools are required to make every effort to ensure that pupils encounter all the principal religions represented in Great Britain during their school life.

Alongside their consideration of individual religions, pupils also study how religions relate to each other, recognising both similarities and differences. They also consider the significance of inter-faith dialogue and the important contribution religion can make to community cohesion and to the combating of religious prejudice and negative discrimination.

Learning themes

The learning themes identify the concepts appropriate to religious education in different key stages. Although often related, they must be taught with increasing depth and sufficient breadth. This requirement is demonstrated in the titles of the themes which change and develop across the key stages but remain related e.g. Symbols and Artefacts (Key Stage 1) > Symbols and Religious Expression (Key Stage 2) > Expressions of Spirituality (Key Stage 3).

The learning themes may be taught separately, in combination, or within studies of particular religions. Each learning theme should be seen as requiring the equivalent of one half term's work in religious education, i.e. no less than 6 hours. In constructing a scheme of work it is strongly recommended that the learning themes are integrated e.g. in a unit of work on Hajj at Key Stage 2, pupils might encounter concepts from worship, pilgrimage and sacred spaces, beliefs and questions and symbols and religious expression.

Experiences and opportunities

A broad range of experiences and opportunities are identified which will enrich and broaden pupils' learning in religious education e.g. the use of visits to places of worship, meeting members of faith communities, handling religious artefacts, creative activities and the use of ICT.

There should be opportunities for all pupils to share their own beliefs, viewpoints and ideas without embarrassment or ridicule, including those pupils who come from a religious tradition which is not being studied, or who have no attachment to religious beliefs and practices. Older pupils should also have planned opportunities to take into account secular philosophies, such as Humanism, particularly in considering ultimate questions and ethical issues.



It is important that schools balance the three elements namely, religions and beliefs, learning themes and experiences and opportunities of the breadth of study when developing schemes of work. At times, learning will focus on discrete study of a religion. On other occasions a learning theme or experience will be the central element. It is, of course, possible to combine all three elements. For example, the experience of visiting a place of worship enhances the study of symbolism and develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of a religion.

The programmes of study have been developed on the assumption that reasonable time is provided for religious education. The Suffolk Agreed Syllabus recommends a minimum of 5% curriculum time¹ i.e. 36 hours per year at Key Stage 1 and 45 hours per year at Key Stages 2 and 3. Where schools aggregate the time allocation for themed days or extended projects, they should ensure that RE has a minimum of 5% of curriculum time.

¹ As in the Dearing report *The National Curriculum and its Assessment* – 1993 See also Circular 1/94 and *Designing and timetabling the primary curriculum* (QCA, 2002).

Programme of Study for Key Stage 1

Throughout Key Stage 1 pupils investigate Christianity and are introduced to at least one other principal religion. They learn about different beliefs about God and the world around them. They encounter and respond to a range of stories, artefacts and other religious materials. They learn to recognise that beliefs are expressed in a variety of ways, and begin to use specialist vocabulary. They begin to understand the importance and value of religion and beliefs for some children and their families. Pupils ask relevant questions and use their imagination to develop a sense of wonder about the world. 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.

Knowledge, skills and understanding

Learning about religion and belief

Pupils should be taught to:

- explore a range of religious stories and sacred writings, and talk about their meanings
- name and explore a range of celebrations, worship and rituals in religion, noting similarities and differences, 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 creative and expressive arts and communicate their responses
- identify and suggest meanings for religious symbols and begin to use a range of religious words and phrases.

Learning from religion and belief

Pupils should be taught to:

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

Breadth of study

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

Religion and belief

- Investigating Christianity introducing all the learning themes below
- introducing one other principal religion¹, Judaism – including at least themes 1 – 4
- encountering examples from other religions (Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam or Sikhism) possibly with a local presence and a secular world view as appropriate, and touching on any relevant area of study.

N.B. More time should be spent on Christianity than on any other individual religion with a minimum equivalent of no fewer than three terms on Christianity and one on Judaism.

Learning themes²

1 Believing	What some families believe about God, the natural world, human beings, a significant figure
2 Belonging	Where and how people belong and why belonging is important
3 Prayer and Worship	How and why some people pray and what happens in a place of worship
4 Leaders and Teachers	Figures who have an influence on others locally, nationally and globally in religion and why
5 Stories and Books	How and why some stories and books are sacred and important
6 Celebrations	What celebrations are important in religion and why
7 Symbols and Artefacts	How symbols and artefacts are used to express religious meaning and why they are used

Experiences and opportunities

- visiting places of worship with a focus on stories, symbols and feelings
- listening and responding to visitors from local faith communities
- using their senses to explore religious artefacts
- experiencing times of celebration, ritual, silence and quiet reflection
- using art and design, music, dance and drama to express feelings and ideas
- beginning to use ICT to explore religion and belief
- encountering secular world views and sharing their own beliefs, ideas and values.

1 This contributes to the fulfillment of the statutory requirement to teach about all 'principal' religions in Britain. It does not exclude the teaching of other faiths or suggest one faith is more or less important than others.

2 Each learning theme is developed into key questions relating to the six principal religions in the Non-statutory Curriculum Guidance for Religious Education in Suffolk Schools 2012. This will enable teachers to construct units of work around key questions.

Programme of Study for Key Stage 2

Throughout Key Stage 2 pupils learn about Christianity and other religions, recognising the impact of religion and belief both locally and globally. They make connections between differing aspects of religion and consider 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 the importance of dialogue between people of different beliefs. They extend the range and use of specialist vocabulary. They recognise the challenges involved in distinguishing between ideas of right and wrong, and in valuing what is good and true. They communicate their ideas clearly, 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.

Knowledge, skills and understanding

Learning about religion and belief

Pupils should be taught to:

- describe the key aspects of religions, especially the people, stories and traditions that influence their beliefs and values
- 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 and belief

Pupils should be taught to:

- reflect on what it means to belong to a faith community, communicating their own and others' responses
- respond to the challenges of commitment both in their own lives and within religious traditions, recognising how commitment to a religion is shown in a variety of ways
- discuss their own and 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.

Breadth of study

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

Religion and belief

- Exploring Christianity in more detail – incorporating each learning theme overleaf
- Investigating two principal religions¹
Hinduism and Islam – including at least themes 1 – 4
- Revisiting or encountering the other principal religious communities (Buddhism, Judaism, Sikhism) touching on various themes or looking at one in detail.
- a secular world view within any of the themes.

N.B. A minimum equivalent of four terms should be spent on Christianity, two terms each on Hinduism and Islam and one term on each of the other religions. Christianity should be included in each year and more time spent on it than on any other individual religion.

Learning themes²

1 Beliefs and Questions	What key beliefs people hold about God, the world and humans
2 Inspirational People	Why some figures, e.g. founders, leaders and teachers, inspire religious believers
3 Teachings and Authority	What sacred texts and other sources say about God, the world and human life
4 Religion and the Individual	What is expected of a believer following a religion and the impact of belief on people's lives
5 Religion, Family and Community	How religious families and communities practise their faith and the contributions this makes to local life
6 Worship, Pilgrimage and Sacred Places	Where, how and why people worship, including the importance of some particular religious sites
7 The Journey of Life and Death	Why some occasions are sacred to believers and what people think about life after death
8 Symbols and Religious Expression	How religious and spiritual ideas are expressed
9 Beliefs in Action in the World	How religions respond to global issues e.g. human rights, fairness, social justice and the importance of the environment

¹ This contributes to the fulfillment of the statutory requirement to teach about all 'principal' religions in Britain. It does not exclude the teaching of other faiths or suggest one faith is more or less important than others.

² Each learning theme is developed into key questions relating to the six principal religions in the Non-statutory Curriculum Guidance for Religious Education in Suffolk Schools 2012. This will enable teachers to construct units of work around key questions.

Experiences and opportunities

- encountering religion through visitors or visits to places of worship where possible, and where not, making use of video, Internet and e-mail
- meeting, in action and dialogue, including people who are religious believers and considering a range of human and religious experiences and feelings
- debating some religious and philosophical questions, reflecting on their own and others' insights into life and its origin, purpose and meaning and learning to disagree respectfully
- expressing and communicating their own and others' insights through art and design, music, dance, drama and ICT
- comparing religions with the world views of pupils, including, where appropriate, secular philosophies or religious traditions not otherwise being studied
- developing ICT use, particularly in enhancing pupils' awareness of religion and belief globally.



“I learn in RE through stories – they make me think and use my imagination” Year 3 student

“I like the way in RE, a question often leads to a question” Primary student

Programme of Study for Key Stage 3

Throughout Key Stage 3 pupils extend their understanding of Christianity and other principal religions in a local, national and global context. They deepen their understanding of important beliefs, concepts and issues of truth and authority in religion. They apply their understanding of religious and philosophical beliefs, teachings and practices to a range of ultimate questions and ethical issues, with a focus on self-awareness, relationships, rights and responsibilities. They enquire into and explain some personal, philosophical, theological and cultural reasons for similarities and differences in religious beliefs and values, both within and between religions. They interpret religious texts and other sources, recognising both the power and limitations of language and other forms of communication in expressing ideas and beliefs. They reflect on the impact of religion and belief in the world, considering both the importance of inter-faith dialogue and the tensions that exist between people of different beliefs. They develop their evaluative skills, showing reasoned and balanced viewpoints when considering their own and others' responses to religious, philosophical and spiritual issues.



Knowledge, skills and understanding

Learning about religion and belief

Pupils should be taught to:

- investigate and explain the differing impacts of religious beliefs and teachings on individuals and 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 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 religious, historical and cultural contexts
- interpret a variety of forms of religious and spiritual expression.



Learning from religion and belief

Pupils should be taught to:

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

Breadth of study

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

Religion and belief

- studying Christianity in depth – incorporating each learning theme overleaf
- exploring two principal religions¹ : Buddhism and Sikhism – including at least themes 1 – 3
- revisiting Hinduism, Islam and Judaism selecting whichever areas of study are appropriate
- considering other religious traditions
e.g Baha'i, represented locally or where they have particular relevance to an area of study being covered.

N.B. Christianity should be studied in each year with a minimum equivalent of three terms across Key Stage 3. The minimum equivalent of one term should be spent on each of Sikhism and Buddhism.

“RE makes you think of questions which you might never have thought of like ‘should we take religion to another planet?’” Secondary student

“If we didn’t do RE we would be stuck in our own little bubble” Secondary student

¹ This contributes to the fulfillment of the statutory requirement to teach about all 'principal' religions in Britain. It does not exclude teaching of other faiths or suggest one faith is more or less important than others.

Learning themes¹

1 Beliefs and Concepts	The key ideas and questions of meaning in a religion including issues relating to God, truth, the world, human life and life after death
2 Authority	Different sources of authority and how they inform believers' lives
3 Expressions of Spirituality	How, and in what forms, humans express their understanding of who they are, their beliefs about God, life and so on
4 Ethics and Relationships	Questions and influences that inform people's ethical and moral choices including forgiveness and issues of good and evil
5 Rights and Responsibilities	What religions say about human rights and responsibilities, social justice and citizenship
6 Religion and Science	Issues of truth, explanation, meaning and purpose which arise in the debate between science and religion
7 Global issues	What religions say about health, wealth, war, animal rights and the environment
8 Inter-faith dialogue	How religions relate to each other and some examples of conflicts and collaboration within and between religions

Experiences and opportunities

- encountering people with different religious, secular, cultural and philosophical backgrounds who can express a range of convictions on religious and ethical issues
- visiting, where possible, a place of major or national religious significance and using opportunities in ICT to enhance pupils' understanding of such sites
- 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 the arts, dance, drama, writing and ICT) to communicate their ideas and responses creatively and thoughtfully
- exploring connections between religious education and other subject areas such as arts, humanities, literature and science



¹ Each learning theme is developed into key questions relating to the six principal religions in the Non-statutory Curriculum Guidance for Religious Education in Suffolk Schools 2012. This will enable teachers to construct units of work around key questions.

Programme of Study 14 – 19

Throughout this phase, students analyse and interpret a wide range of religious, philosophical and ethical concepts in increasing depth. They investigate issues of diversity within and between religions and the ways in which religion and spirituality are expressed in philosophy, ethics, science and the arts. They expand and balance their evaluations of the impact of religions on individuals, communities and societies, locally, nationally and globally. They understand the importance of dialogue between and among different religion and belief. They gain a greater understanding of how religion and belief contribute to community cohesion, recognising the various perceptions people have regarding the roles of religion in the world.

Knowledge, skills and understanding

Learning about religion and belief

Students should be taught to:

- investigate, study and interpret significant religious, philosophical and ethical issues, including the study of religious and spiritual experience, in the light of their own sense of identity, experience and commitments
- think rigorously and present coherent, widely informed and detailed arguments about beliefs, ethics, values and issues, drawing well-substantiated conclusions
- develop their understanding of the principal methods by which religions and spirituality are studied
- draw upon, interpret and evaluate the rich and varied forms of creative expression in religious life
- use specialist vocabulary to evaluate critically both the power and limitations of religious language.

Learning from religion and belief

Students should be taught to:

- reflect on, express and justify their own opinions in the light of their Learning about religion and belief and their study of religious, philosophical, moral and spiritual questions
- develop their own values and attitudes in order to recognise their rights and responsibilities in the light of their Learning about religion and belief
- relate their learning in religious education to the wider world, gaining a sense of personal autonomy in preparation for adult life
- develop skills that are useful in a wide range of careers and in adult life generally, especially skills of critical enquiry, creative problem-solving, and communication in a variety of media.



“Auschwitz was just a photograph, then when I went there it was different”
Secondary student

Breadth of Study

14 – 19 students should be taught the knowledge, skills and understanding through the following:

Religion and belief

Schools must continue to offer opportunities to study Christianity and to reflect on other principal religions, and also other beliefs, secular world-views and philosophies, in the context of a pluralistic society.

Areas of study

At Key Stage 4, i.e. for all students 14 – 16, schools should provide access to:

- a course provided by a recognised examination board which leads to a qualification approved under Section 96¹ although schools need not enter all pupils for examination. The course provided should require a significant study of the beliefs and values of Christianity and at least one other religion².

or

- a course based on the 14 – 19 programme of study which has been designed by the school and received the approval of SACRE².

At Key Stage 5, i.e. for all students 16 – 19, schools should provide access to:

- a course that represents a progression in religious education from 14 – 16, such as AS or A level religious studies or religious education. Students will be deemed to be receiving their religious education entitlement where the course requires some significant study of a world religion or engagement with religious ideas.

or

- a minimum of 15 hours study of religious, ethical and philosophical topics through a choice of: regular timetabled courses, modules in an enrichment course, group projects for presentation, a complementary studies approach, self-directed study, day conferences, or field trips, for example.

Experiences and opportunities

All courses should provide experiences and opportunities within and beyond school for learning that involves first-hand engagement with people of strong commitment to a religious faith or secular belief system. This may involve visits, for example, to places of worship or community activities, public meetings or places of employment, education, training or recreation in the local area, but should also offer a chance to engage with such experiences on a national or international level where possible, for example, using internet links, traveling to suitable conferences, study trips to places of national or international religious significance.

¹ Section 96 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000. This requires maintained schools to provide only qualifications approved by the Secretary of State.² See Non-statutory Curriculum Guidance for Religious Education in Suffolk Schools 2012 for details of this.



Attainment Targets in Religious Education

The key aims for religious education are reflected in the two attainment targets.

Attainment Target 1 – Learning about religion and belief

is concerned with enquiry into, and investigation of, the nature of religion, its beliefs, teachings and sources, practices and ways of life, and forms of expression. It includes the skills of interpretation, analysis and explanation. It also includes identifying and developing an understanding of ultimate questions and ethical issues. It covers knowledge and understanding of individual religions and how they relate to each other as well as the study of the nature and characteristics of religion. It involves the of knowledge and understanding using specialist vocabulary.

Attainment Target 2 – Learning from religion and belief

is concerned with developing pupils' ability to reflect on and respond to their own and others' experiences in the light of their Learning about religion and belief. It develops pupils' skills of application, interpretation and evaluation of what they learn about religion. It enables pupils to develop and communicate their own ideas, in relation to questions of identity and belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, and values and commitments.

The Level Descriptions

The attainment targets contain eight level descriptions of increasing difficulty, plus a description for exceptional performance above level 8.

Each level description describes the types and range of performance in religious education that pupils working at that level should characteristically demonstrate. Apart from their summative use, these level descriptions can also be used in assessment for learning.

The level descriptions for Attainment Target 1 – Learning about religion and belief refer to how pupils develop their knowledge, skills and understanding with reference to:

- beliefs, teachings and sources
- practices and ways of life
- forms of expression.

The level descriptions for Attainment Target 2 – Learning from religion and belief refer to how pupils, in the light of their Learning about religion and belief, express their responses and insights with regard to questions and issues about:

- identity and belonging
- meaning, purpose and truth
- values and commitments.

The level descriptions provide the basis for making judgements about pupils' developing knowledge, skills and understanding at the end of Key Stages 1 to 3.

In the foundation stage, children are expected to meet the early learning goals in Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage (QCA, 2000) but the descriptions for level 1 will give guidance on their progress in religious education.

	Range of levels within which great majority of pupils are expected to work	Expected attainment for the majority of pupils at the end of the key stage
Key Stage 1	levels 1 – 3	at age 7 – level 2
Key Stage 2	levels 2 – 5	at age 11 – level 4
Key Stage 3	levels 3 – 7	at age 14 – level 5 or 6

At Key Stage 4, national qualifications are the main means of assessing attainment in religious education. Where national qualifications are not being used for assessment at Key Stage 4 and also in the sixth form, judgements may continue to be made, where appropriate, against the higher level descriptions.

Assessing attainment at the end of a key stage

The two attainment targets, 'Learning about religion and belief' and 'Learning from religion and belief' are closely related and neither should be taught in isolation. Therefore, assessment needs to take place in relation to both attainment targets.

When assessing a pupil's level of attainment at the end of a key stage, teachers should judge which description best fits the pupil's performance. When doing so, each description should be considered alongside descriptions for adjacent levels.

The Suffolk Agreed Syllabus requires schools to report progress in terms of levels of attainment at the end of Key Stages 2 and 3. SACRE may ask schools to submit the levels attained by pupils at the end of these two key stages as part of its responsibility to monitor religious education in Suffolk. In addition, progress must be assessed and reported where pupils transfer between schools at other points. It is important to note that not all aspects of religious education can be assessed. For example, pupils may express personal views and ideas that, although integral to teaching and learning, would not be appropriate for formal assessment.

A note on reporting pupils' progress to parents:

It is a statutory requirement for schools to provide, at least annually, a written report to parents on their child's progress in religious education¹. While it is not a requirement to report annually in relation to the levels of attainment in the Agreed Syllabus, it is recommended that teachers use the levels as a basis for a descriptive evaluation of a pupil's progress in religious education.

¹ Statutory instrument 1992/3168 (DFE Circular 16/93) Cf Circular 1.9 para 125/6

Level Descriptions for Religious Education

Level 1

Attainment Target 1

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.

Attainment Target 2

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.

Level 2

Attainment Target 1

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.

Attainment Target 2

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.

Level 3

Attainment Target 1

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.

Attainment Target 2

Pupils identify what influences them, making links between aspects of their own and 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.

Level 4

Attainment Target 1

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.

Attainment Target 2

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.

Level 5

Attainment Target 1

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.

Attainment Target 2

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.

Level 6

Attainment Target 1

Pupils use religious and philosophical vocabulary to give informed accounts of religion and belief, explaining the reasons for diversity within and between them. They explain why the impact of religion and belief 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.

Attainment Target 2

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

Level 7

Attainment Target 1

Pupils use a wide religious and philosophical vocabulary to show a coherent understanding of a range of religion and belief. 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.

Attainment Target 2

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.

Level 8

Attainment Target 1

Pupils use a comprehensive religious and philosophical vocabulary to analyse a range of religion and belief. They contextualise interpretations of religion with reference to historical, cultural, social and philosophical ideas. They critically evaluate the impact of religion and belief 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.

Attainment Target 2

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.

Exceptional performance

Attainment Target 1

Pupils use a complex religious, moral and philosophical vocabulary to provide a consistent and detailed analysis of religion and belief. 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.

Attainment Target 2

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



Ensuring Access for Pupils with Learning Difficulties

Religious education must be taught to all registered pupils, except those withdrawn by their parents. In special schools, religious education should be taught according to the Agreed Syllabus as far as is practicable.

Differentiation and careful planning are important in teaching all pupils. Many teachers have considerable expertise in delivering the curriculum to such pupils and will be able to use their skills to help them access the programmes of study in the Agreed Syllabus.

In 2001, QCA issued curriculum guidance on teaching religious education to pupils with learning difficulties.² This does not provide a separate religious education curriculum or act as an alternative to the Agreed Syllabus. It demonstrates ways of accessing the curriculum, and supports staff in developing material to respond to their pupils' needs at each key stage. The Non-statutory Curriculum Guidance for Religious Education in Suffolk Schools 2012 contains some of the QCA guidance, including performance indicators ('P' levels), which help teachers recognise progress and attainment in religious education up to level 1 of the attainment targets and which can be useful in structuring teaching. The advice below also comes from the QCA guidance.

Modifying the curriculum for religious education:

The statutory inclusion statement of the national curriculum requires staff to modify programmes of study to give all pupils relevant and appropriately challenging work at each key stage. Staff teaching religious education are encouraged to note this and teach knowledge, skills and understanding in ways that match and challenge pupils' abilities.

Staff can modify the curriculum for religious education by:

- choosing material from earlier key stages, while being aware of age, appropriateness and progression
- maintaining, consolidating, reinforcing and generalising, as well as introducing new knowledge, skills and understanding
- using the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus or other guidance as a resource, or to provide a context, in planning learning appropriate to the age and needs of pupils
- focusing on one aspect, or a limited number of aspects, in depth or in outline
- integrating, for pupils at the early stages of learning, religious education with other subjects and as part of their everyday activities, including routines and shared events
- accessing religious education through personal exploration and contact with a range of people
- providing a variety of learning environments/contexts in which content can be delivered.

¹ See *Statutory Requirements for the Provision of Religious Education* page 3.

² *Planning, teaching and assessing the curriculum for pupils with learning difficulties: Religious Education* QCA/01/750.

³ See *Religious Education and inclusion* on page 10.

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