

Challenging R.E. IV

Learning and growing through Challenging R.E.

The Buckinghamshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education

Exploring the importance and place of religion
& worldviews in the modern world

2022 - 2027

A Model for Religious Education

How we behave and live our lives affects other people and the world we live in.

This is why our behaviour and ways of living are important issues.

Our behaviour is influenced by our attitudes.

Our attitudes are influenced by our experiences and beliefs.

RE is the opportunity to reflect on our experience of the world and the beliefs, values and attitudes that guide us through life.

We do this by exploring the beliefs, values, practices, and ways of living from the principal religions and different worldviews.

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 people live their lives.

Although RE is statutory, it justifies its place in the curriculum on purely educational grounds.

Buckinghamshire SACRE believes that religious education contributes to a wider vision for education in which the core purpose is human development. Knowledge and skills are of central importance, they are manifestly necessary, but not in themselves sufficient. Education is also about the development of people, their attitudes, and dispositions and how they relate to themselves, each other, and the world they inhabit. It is part of our development as human beings. All subjects in the curriculum should contribute to this, some more and some less so. Religious education has a particularly significant contribution to make because it is about a person's way of experiencing, responding to and understanding the world. (see the [Commission on Religious Education, Religion and World Views The Way Forward, A National Plan](#) for RE 2018 page 4)

As with the previous versions of 'Challenging RE', experience is at the foundation of our approach. This experience is at an individual, an institutional and a universal level and it enables pupils to reflect on their own sense of value and identity through an open, critical, and academic exploration of Christianity and other faiths and worldviews.

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Foreword

It is with great pleasure that we recommend this agreed syllabus to all maintained schools in the County, and we heartily encourage Voluntary Aided Schools, Foundation Schools, Academies and Free Schools to take this syllabus on board as the basis for planning an RE Curriculum across Buckinghamshire.

Never has it been more important for our children and young people to be able to understand the role of religion and belief in local, national, and global contexts. We live in challenging times, and it is appropriate that we continue this title for our newly revised Buckinghamshire Agreed Syllabus. The Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) had to consider national changes and developments, both in RE and in education in general. As a consequence, the ASC agreed on minimal changes so that schools may, if they wish, continue as before with no need to change. There is less prescription of 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.

It provides an excellent basis from which to plan an ambitious and sequential RE curriculum and makes explicit the ‘Worldviews Approach’ that had been underpinning Challenging RE in its previous formats.

We are most grateful to the writing panel of teachers who worked with our adviser Bill Moore under very difficult circumstances because of Covid. This was all done remotely, via Zoom, and so collaboration was far more challenging than in previous years. In addition to this, the teachers themselves were working under the most difficult conditions as they strove to teach children through lockdowns, rapidly changing circumstances and external demands, not to mention their own health and wellbeing. It is a real credit to their tenacity, commitment and creativity that this syllabus has been produced. We hope that this, along with the support materials, will help to provide pupils in Buckinghamshire with the high-quality religious education that they need and deserve.

Margaret Dean
Chair of SACRE

Cllr Anita Cranmer
Cabinet Member,
Education and Children's Services



Continuity and Change

It was clear from the questionnaire completed by many schools that teachers did not want to see a totally new syllabus being produced. On the whole, there was strong support for the syllabus itself and teachers' main concerns were assessment and support materials to strengthen planning and boost teacher confidence. The Agreed Syllabus Conference found this encouraging and requested that the writing panel of teachers should take this on board, which they have done.

In addition, some minor amendments have been made. The introductory sections have been sharpened and made clearer. The section on personal development has been revised and linked to current Ofsted requirements.

The four aims of the Agreed Syllabus remain, but

- the wording of the first aim includes 'worldviews' to take account of recent developments in RE (Commission on Religious Education Report 2018); and
- the second aim has changed from '*pursue quest for meaning, purpose and value*' to '*reflect on questions of meaning, purpose and value*'

The skills progression through the learning process has been sharpened. Progression through Key Stage two has been enhanced by the inclusion of statements and descriptors of expectations to support teacher planning for Lower Key Stage two (years 3-4) and Upper Key Stage two (years 5-6).

The syllabus clarifies the importance of concepts in developing pupil knowledge and understanding of religions and worldviews and support materials will be included in the non-statutory appendices to guide Subject Leaders/Heads of Department in their curriculum planning.

Text in blue is non-statutory guidance / suggestion.

Changes in Content:

- The syllabus continues to recommend the same religions to be studied at Key Stage 1, 2 and 3 as per the previous Agreed Syllabus, but extends the choice in Key Stage 2 so that teachers can plan a curriculum that is more appropriate to their school and pupils
- Humanism has been introduced explicitly in Upper Key Stage 2, Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 to reflect the changes in RE on the basis of the Commission on RE Report 2018 and Human Rights legislation.
- Context and core questions have been refined and made clearer at each key stage.
- The new agreed syllabus provides a set of ‘enquiries’ for each key stage which Subject Leaders/Heads of Departments use as the basis for their curriculum planning. The non-statutory appendices will include additional support materials to help in this process.
- ‘Disciplinary Approaches’ have been added to Appendix 1: ‘Different approaches to learning and teaching in RE’, to reflect recent developments in RE and enable Subject Leaders/Heads of Department with their planning.

In addition, the SACRE, through the writing panel, will be providing more detailed guidance on planning for Subject Leaders/Heads of Department in the form of a Subject Leader’s Handbook and for teachers there will be more information on religious and non-religious worldviews.

In these ways, SACRE is confident that subject leaders will be better able to plan an appropriate sequential and ambitious curriculum for the pupils in the school, and to support their teachers in the delivery of quality RE.



1. Introduction:

1.1. The Nature and Purpose of the Agreed Syllabus

The Agreed Syllabus is the statutory long-term planning document for Religious Education in Buckinghamshire maintained schools, including Voluntary Controlled schools. It provides the overall rationale, aims, objectives and broadly what must be taught whilst allowing for the subject leader's professional judgement to determine the detail, order and methods used. It also specifies the principles of assessment to provide a coherent structure for planning, progression, and reporting. This forms the basis for the school to develop its curriculum **intent, implementation, and impact** as appropriate to the whole school curriculum and the context of the pupils.

It is not, and nor can it be, a detailed scheme of work to be delivered by teachers to pupils. This should be used by the **subject leader** to develop a school curriculum.

Support materials for teachers will be made available in a separate document.

The syllabus provides a learning process in which pupils explore the themes and issues raised by religion and worldviews through key stage enquiries and concepts in the light of the pupils' own experience and questions.

1.2. The Statutory Place of RE in Education in England

RE is part of the basic curriculum and is statutory for all state-funded schools.

The national requirements for Religious Education are set out in the 1944, 1988 Education Acts and section 375(3) of the 1996 Education Act:

'Every Agreed Syllabus shall reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teachings and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'.

This is further explained in DfE circular 1/94 from which the following paragraphs are taken:

'Religious Education is required to be included, alongside the National Curriculum, in the basic curriculum which all maintained schools must provide for their registered pupils; this includes those in reception classes and sixth forms and is not confined to pupils of compulsory school age'.
(Paragraph 20.)

The DfE has clearly stated that: '*All state schools... must teach religious education... All schools must publish their curriculum by subject and academic year online.*' (National Curriculum in England: Framework Document, DfE, September 2013, page 4).

'*If the parent asks that a child should be wholly or partly excused from Religious Education at the school, then the school must comply.*' (Paragraph 44.)

'*As a whole and at each Key Stage, the relative content devoted to Christianity in the syllabus should predominate.*' (Paragraph 35.) After Buckinghamshire County Council consulted with Queens Council in 2006, this was interpreted as meaning that '**Christianity should have more time devoted to it than the other religions taken together**'.

The Agreed Syllabus, appropriately implemented, provides a coherent, progressive experience of RE for pupils from Reception to post-16, enabling schools to meet statutory requirements and provide educational value. It is expected, except in EYFS and post-16, or relating to an external examination course, that a minimum of **5% of curriculum time across each Key Stage** (approximately one hour per week) is provided to enable quality learning to take place. It is up to the school to decide how this is planned and provided, but it must ensure that the RE curriculum as a whole develops knowledge and is sequential and ambitious with clear end points.

R.E. in Academies and Free Schools:

The requirement to teach Religious Education is part of the funding agreement for **Free Schools and Academies and Multi-Academy Trusts**, which must provide RE in accordance with the same requirements as for an Agreed Syllabus Conference. Free Schools and Academies can adopt the locally Agreed Syllabus if they so choose, by agreement of the board of directors, and SACRE encourages those in Buckinghamshire to do so in the interests of continuity, coherence, and opportunities to share best practice across all schools.

Buckinghamshire SACRE has also taken some account of the Commission on Religious Education (CoRE) report (2018) in its use of 'worldview' as central to the provision of high-quality RE. We have adapted the CoRE report's understanding of 'worldview' to be a person's way of experiencing, responding to and understanding the world and that RE includes personal as well as institutional worldviews. Worldviews can be fluid, with people often drawing on aspects of a number of institutional worldviews.

"A worldview is a person's way of understanding, experiencing, and responding to the world. It can be described as a philosophy of life or an approach to life. This includes how a person understands the nature of reality and their own place in the world. A person's worldview is likely to influence and be influenced by their beliefs, values, behaviours, experiences, identities and commitments." (page 4).

We believe that this has always been implicit in 'Challenging RE', not least in its learning process (see page 16), the centrality of lived experience and its focus on enabling pupils to reflect on their own worldview as they explore other religions and worldviews.

2. The Importance of Religious Education

RE is the opportunity to explore a major and distinctive dimension of what it means to be a person: the search for meaning, purpose and value in a wondrous but also often confusing and sometimes threatening world. RE offers pupils the chance to raise and reflect on perennial questions about life. In doing this, it draws on the rich history of the major religious traditions and other worldviews in Britain, giving due prominence to Christianity to reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain, are in the main, Christian.

Thus, there are two main **educational purposes** to RE. Firstly so that pupils can learn more about themselves and their place in the world *from* their study of religion and worldviews. Secondly, so that they can learn *about* religions and worldviews which have influenced the lives of millions of people and heavily influenced the development of different human cultures. *These two purposes work together and should not be treated separately.*

RE is therefore both **rigorously academic and personally significant**.

Quality RE:

- Teaches pupils about Christianity and other religions and worldviews so that they can understand the world better and develop their own sense of place within it.
- Engages pupils of any religious faith or none and of all academic abilities and social backgrounds.
- Enables pupils to engage with a range of sources such as texts, artefacts, and people.
- Challenges pupils to question and explore their own and others' understanding of the world.
- Does not seek to urge beliefs upon pupils, nor compromise their own beliefs but rather to deepen their self-understanding and understanding of others.
- Raises questions of identity, meaning, purpose and value and encourages pupils to reflect on experience, ways of living and ways of knowing.
- Contributes positively and powerfully to the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of pupils (SMSC).
- Provides opportunities for pupils to develop communication and thinking skills.
- Explores visions of humanity and at the same time reflects on the depths to which humanity can sink.

2.1. RE and Personal Development

As recognised in the School Inspection Handbook (April 2021, paragraph 256), RE contributes to Personal Development both in terms of **character education** and the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development (SMSC) of pupils of all ages.

Pupils' own experiences, beliefs and perceptions lie at the heart of RE. RE develops self-concept and self-esteem, explores spiritual, moral, and social frameworks, and encourages pupils to reflect on experiences and emotions. In this way it contributes significantly to personal development.

RE and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSC).

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 and of life, 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 reality.
- Reflecting on humanity's responsibilities to and for the natural world.
- 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 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.
- Contributing to and reflecting on the significance of 'Fundamental British and Human Values' and preventing the risks of radicalisation.

Religious Education provides opportunities to promote cultural development through:

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

3. The Basis for Planning Quality Religious Education:

3.1. The Four Aims of RE

1. To understand the nature, role and influence of religion and worldviews, locally, nationally, and globally.
2. To reflect on questions of meaning, purpose and value.
3. To formulate reasoned opinion and argument.
4. To enter into meaningful dialogue with people of different beliefs and backgrounds, appreciating and celebrating diversity, recognising what we hold in common, and respecting a shared humanity that can be experienced, expressed, and responded to in diverse ways.

These are developed in the following ways, which can be seen as 'steps' to achieve each aim:

1. To understand the nature, role and influence of religion and worldviews, locally, nationally, and globally by:

- Developing knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other faiths, and worldviews (KS1 onwards).
- Exploring similarities and differences between the religions and worldviews (KS1 onwards).
- Considering the nature and interpretation of sources of authority in Christianity, other faiths and worldviews (Lower KS2 onwards).
- Exploring similarities and differences within religions and worldviews (Lower KS2 onwards).
- Understanding what it means to belong to a religious community and the influence religious faith has on individuals and communities (Upper KS2 onwards).
- Considering the way religious teaching and practice relate to ultimate questions (Upper KS2 onwards).
- Evaluating the benefits and challenges of living in a multi-faith and diverse society; (KS3 onwards).
- Developing the ability to analyse and think critically about religious and other beliefs and practices and different interpretations of these (KS3 onwards).
- Analysing and evaluating the significance of religion and worldviews in the modern world (KS4 onwards).

2. To reflect on questions of meaning, purpose, and value by:

- Reflecting on the significance of their own and others' personal experience and emotion (KS1 onwards).
- Thinking about what influences our beliefs and lifestyle and the way we see things (Lower KS2 onwards).
- Exploring different religious and non-religious beliefs about meaning, purpose and value (Upper KS2 onwards).
- Raising and exploring the ultimate questions which arise from these (Upper KS2 onwards).
- Reflecting on and expressing their own responses to ultimate questions in the light of their own and others experiences and beliefs (KS3 onwards)
- Analysing and evaluating the impact these responses can have in the world (KS4 onwards)

3. To formulate reasoned opinion/argument by:

- Gaining the necessary knowledge and understanding to give informed opinions with reasons (KS1 onwards).
- Developing the skills of questioning (KS1 onwards) and reasoning (Lower KS2 onwards).
- Developing the ability to see things from other peoples' perspective (Upper KS2 onwards).
- Evaluating the influence of beliefs on attitudes and behaviour (KS3 onwards).
- Developing skills of interpretation, argumentation, and justification (KS3 onwards).
- Developing the ability to analyse and evaluate strengths and weaknesses in arguments/ stances (KS4 onwards).

4. In achieving these three aims, pupils will be better able to enter into meaningful dialogue with people of different beliefs and ways of living.

Note - General skills such as enquiry, analysis, reasoning are developed age-appropriately at all key stages.

3.2. The Learning Process for 'Challenging RE'

This Agreed Syllabus is built around a vision of education in which the core purpose is our development as human beings. This learning process enables schools to plan learning that meets many of the recommendations for teaching 'Religion and Worldviews' found in the Commission on Religious Education (CoRE) report (2018).

These include the aims and purposes where it states that religion and worldviews "*is more than learning facts... it is about understanding the human quest for meaning, being prepared for life in a diverse world and having space to reflect on one's own worldview*" (CoRE report page 73).

It also places emphasis on developing skills that enable young people to:

- *Reflect on their own personal responses to the fundamental human questions to which worldviews respond,*
- *Learn to articulate these responses clearly and cogently while respecting the right of others to differ,*
- *Develop skills relevant to various disciplinary approaches,*
- *Develop wider transferable skills and dispositions.*

(CoRE report page 77)

The following learning process lies at the heart of Challenging RE. Learning in RE involves helping pupils make sense of life. Learning about religions, beliefs and ways of living is the vehicle through which they develop their understanding of themselves, others and the world.

The learning process involves a journey with three possible starting points (see diagram on page 16):

1. **What does it mean to be me?** Pupils' own experience and self-concept,
2. **What does it mean to be you?** Religious/worldview experience, concepts and content,
3. **What does it mean to be human?** Universal human experience and concepts.

The teacher can decide which aspect is the best entry-point to the enquiry for the pupils and/or what they will be learning. The model incorporates skills-development and progression. The skills running along the outside of the arrows are described for each Key Stage, thus providing a means of progression. Teachers use these to plan challenging learning. Thus, at KS1 the process will be basic and will become more complex and challenging as pupils progress through school.

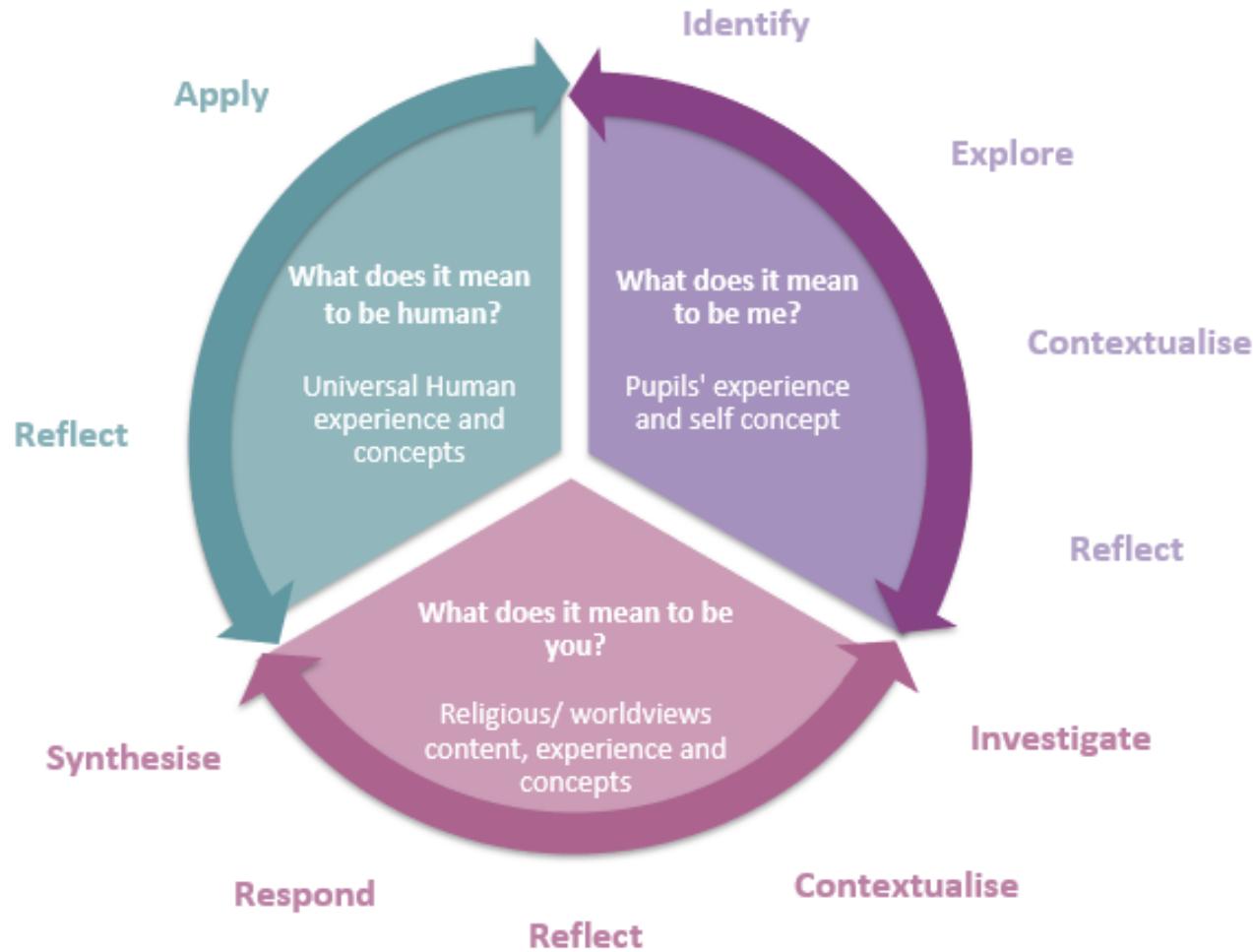
Pupils will grow to recognise how we are all different, yet we share our humanity in common (what we refer to as '**identity-in-difference**'), so that through their exploration of religious and non-religious worldviews, they will develop their own understanding of what it means to be human and their own sense of meaning, purpose and value in relation to others.



The Learning Process within Challenging RE

Learning and growing through Challenging RE (academic rigour and personal development)

Learning can start from any of the three questions.



3.3 Concepts in RE

Concepts are key ideas that shape our understanding. In RE, these relate to how we understand or make sense of life – for example, identity; purpose; value. So in RE, concepts relate to experience – to the lives of children, young people and communities and involve our attitudes to life as well as ideas and beliefs.

Concepts are complex, expressing deeply held feelings, beliefs, convictions, dispositions, and identities and these can be expressed in different ways, which include some or all of:



These are outward expressions of deeper experience and meaning and can be explored through the use of key questions and through an exploration of key concepts. This approach, which we refer to as **conceptual creativity** provides a method for looking more deeply at concepts that are contained in ritual, belief, identity, and experience.

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

Recently, there has been much interest in and research into disciplinary approaches to RE. These form a fourth category of '**disciplinary concepts**' that can be seen as ways into exploring religions and worldviews. (See page 56)

1. **Universal human concepts.**
2. **General religious concepts.**
3. **Religion-specific concepts.**
4. **Disciplinary concepts.**

4. What Pupils will Learn in RE:

4.1. Deciding which Religions to Study:

The Agreed Syllabus **recommends** that schools explore the following religions, although schools are free to plan a curriculum appropriate to the needs and backgrounds of their pupils:

Key Stage	Religions
Key Stage 1 (KS1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Christianity plus one other Abrahamic religion in depth (the syllabus recommends Judaism).• With reference to one Dharmic tradition and non-religious backgrounds (not necessarily a specific non-religious worldview).
Lower Key Stage 2 (LKS2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Christianity plus one different Abrahamic religion and one Dharmic tradition in depth (the syllabus recommends Islam and Hinduism).• With reference to other religious traditions and non-religious perspectives as appropriate.
Upper Key Stage 2 (UKS2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Christianity plus one other Abrahamic religion and one Dharmic tradition (these could either be a continuation from LKS2 or different ones, the syllabus recommends continuing with Islam and Hinduism) and Humanism.• With reference to other religious traditions and worldviews as appropriate.
Key Stage 3 (KS3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Christianity and two other faiths, at least one from Dharmic traditions, (the Agreed Syllabus recommends Buddhism and Sikhi) plus Humanism in depth.• With reference to other religious and non-religious worldviews as appropriate.

In this way pupils gain an understanding of all six principal faiths and Humanism. However, schools remain free to choose which religions other than Christianity to study and when, **although it is not good educational practice to study all religions over a single key stage, as this results in a lack of depth and conceptual understanding.**

In deciding which religions to study, schools should consider the following:

- What is the background of the pupils?
- How are you contributing to an understanding of the six principal faiths and non-religious worldviews?
- How are you liaising with your main feeder and transfer schools to ensure broad coverage of faiths across the key stages?
- Are you providing a balance by including something from both western (Abrahamic) religions and eastern (Dharmic) traditions?
- What will you include under the category of ‘with reference to’? This enables you to bring in relevant material from different religions and worldviews to illustrate, develop or enrich an understanding of a key concept, or to engage pupils in school from different backgrounds not covered in the ‘in depth’ enquiries of a particular Key Stage.

Abrahamic Faiths (from the line of Abraham)	Dharmic traditions (sharing the concept of Dharma)
Judaism	Hindu Dharma ('Hinduism')
Christianity	Buddhist Dhamma ('Buddhism')
Islam	Sikhi ('Sikhism')

In the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**, teachers will provide opportunities for child-initiated learning and plan adult led learning focusing on the background, experience and needs of the children, ensuring that they introduce experiences that help the children in their Understanding of the World.

Over the course of KS4, pupils will either be entered for an accredited RS qualification such as GCSE

Or (statutory core RE) pupils will explore:

- Christianity and two or three other worldviews in depth.
- With reference to other religious and non-religious worldviews as appropriate.

Or

- Follow a specification from an accredited course in Religious Education or Religious Studies, from one of the recognised examination boards. It will be the school's decision whether all, some or none are entered for the actual qualification, though SACRE encourages schools to enable as many pupils as possible to gain accreditation for their work as this motivates students, celebrates their achievement, and raises the profile of the subject.

NB: This Agreed Syllabus is developed with a three-year KS3 and a two-year KS4 in mind, in line with the most recent research on the effectiveness of learning for pupils.

These religions and worldviews will be explored in an educational **context** appropriate to the experience of the age group and addressing three broad **core questions** through a number of **enquiries**:

Key Stage 1	Context	An exploration of home life and how this influences the beliefs, attitudes and behaviours of children and others in relation to their sense of self, belonging and celebrating what is important in life
	Core Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>How does our background influence who we are?</i><i>How does belonging to a religion or group affect people's lives?</i><i>How should we behave and treat others and the world?</i>
Lower Key Stage 2	Context	An exploration of what people believe to be important in life and why, and how this is expressed.
	Core Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>What is most important in life?</i><i>How do different religions show what is most important to them?</i><i>How does this affect their attitudes and behaviour towards themselves, other people, and the world around them?</i>
Upper Key Stage 2	Context	A reflective exploration of some of the big questions, beliefs, and concepts about life and what it means to be human, and how responses to these are expressed through ritual and ways of living.
	Core Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>What do people believe about life, the world, and the good life?</i><i>Where do these beliefs, attitudes and ways of living come from?</i><i>How are these expressed and lived out in the lives of individuals and communities?</i>

Key Stage 3	Context	A critical engagement with ultimate questions and global issues, exploring, analysing, and responding to a range of responses to these.
	Core Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What place do religions and worldviews have in the modern world?</i> • <i>How do we make sense of life and the world?</i> • <i>How do our responses to these questions influence the ways we live our lives?</i>
Key Stage 4	Context	A critical analysis of questions arising from and issues relating to religious and non-religious worldviews, analysing, and evaluating the impact they have on the modern world.
	Core Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>To what extent are religions and worldviews a positive or negative force in the world?</i> • <i>What is our vision for the world?</i>

Key Stage 5: RE is statutory for all registered pupils in schools, which includes those in the 6th Form, a 6th Form College which is constituted as a school or which is working as part of a consortium, though not for students in Colleges of Further Education.

The Buckingham Agreed Syllabus expects all students to have a statutory entitlement to a minimum of 10 hours of RE in Y12 and a minimum of 5 hours in Y13, which can be planned flexibly. See the section on 6th Form RE on page 44.

4.2. RE in the Early Years and Foundation Stage:

As the 1988 Education Reform Act clearly states, all registered pupils in maintained schools have a statutory 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 and Foundation Stage curriculum and not through the Agreed Syllabus itself. Teachers should teach to the seven areas of learning, working towards the respective Early Learning Goals as the basis of their planning and assessment. What follows is suggested guidance on what RE can contribute to learning in the Reception year.

Remember, this is only statutory for registered pupils (i.e., Reception), but it is good practice to provide for all EYFS some context of belief, belonging and relationships from different cultural and global contexts, especially in relation to Understanding the World: People, Culture and Communities.

The Areas of Learning identified in the Foundation Stage ensure that breadth of learning is possible across a range of individual experiences and activities. The provider uses her/his professional expertise to elicit development in several areas from planned activities and learning experiences.



The Areas of Learning and specific Early Learning Goals (2021) towards which RE can make an explicit contribution are:

Communication and Language	ELG: Listening, Attention and Understanding. ELG: Speaking.
Literacy	ELG: Comprehension. ELG: Writing.
Understanding the World	ELG: Past and Present. ELG: People, Culture and Communities. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.• Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and – when appropriate – maps.
Expressive Arts and Design	ELG: Creating with Materials ELG: Being Imaginative and Expressive

Possible topic areas within RE:

- Myself
- Other people
- How I live
- How other people live
- Important people and faith leaders
- Belonging
- Important things
- Important experiences
- Feelings
- Expressing our feelings
- Celebrations and festivals
- Religious stories and what they mean
- Exploring artefacts and clothing

In exploring these aspects of religious and non-religious worldviews, pupils will reflect on:

- Their own sense of who they are and their uniqueness as a person in a family, community, and world.
- What they believe, what they think is important and how these influence their day-to-day living

It is entirely at the discretion of the Early Year's provider whether these topics are taught separately or within cross-curricular themes. The pupils' own cultures, faiths and beliefs should be a starting point for the children's learning, expanding into the beliefs, cultures, and ways of living from around the globe as appropriate.

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
- Persona dolls
- Painting and drawing

To meet the Early Learning Goals and the requirements of the Buckinghamshire Agreed Syllabus, Reception classes should include specific planned activities (for example on festivals, special places, and faith leaders) for developing children's knowledge and understanding of religious and other beliefs, cultures, and ways of living through circle time and everyday routines as well as through child-initiated opportunities.

4.3. Key Stage 1: Exploring Religion, Experience, and Feelings:

Over the course of KS1, pupils will explore:

- Christianity plus one other Abrahamic religion in depth (the syllabus recommends Judaism)
- With reference to one Dharmic tradition and non-religious perspectives (NB: not necessarily a specific non-religious worldview).

Context: An exploration of home life and how this influences the beliefs, attitudes and behaviours of children and others in relation to their sense of self, belonging and celebrating what is important in life.

Core Questions:

- How does our background influence who we are?
- How does belonging to a religion or group affect people's lives?
- How should we behave and treat others and the world?

The school should build an appropriate curriculum for the pupils and the school, that is ambitious, progressive, sequential, and coherent over the course of Years 1 and 2, using the following enquiries and ensuring the due emphasis the syllabus places on Christianity (see page 8). The enquiries can be in any order the school chooses, and even split to create the best learning for the pupils.

This can be planned, for example, by learning the basic concepts and content for each enquiry in Year 1 and then revisiting this in Year 2 to apply the knowledge to answer the main enquiry question. Or schools might choose to plan the enquiries by each religion separately.

Enquiries (referring back to the core questions):

1. What does it mean to be me? (Who I am).
2. How important are the groups people belong to? (Belonging).
3. What makes some people so important? (Important people).



4. Why are some places so important? (Important places).
5. What makes some things sacred to some groups of people? (Special things).
6. What makes some stories so important to different people? (Sacred books).
7. Why is it important to look after our world? (The natural world).
8. Why do we celebrate important occasions? (Special occasions).

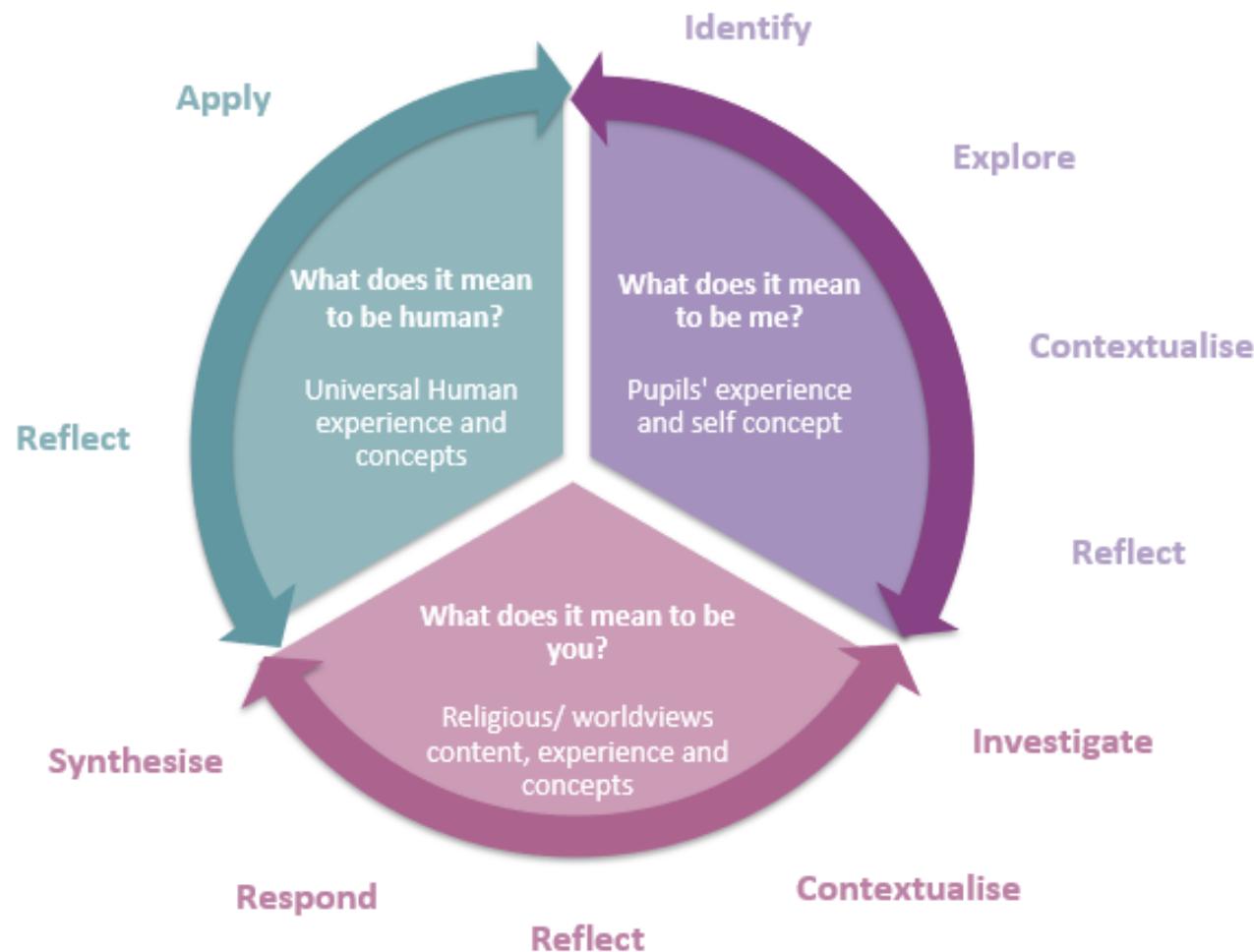
In exploring these questions, **the children will also reflect on:**

- Their own sense of who they are and their uniqueness as a person in a family and community.
- What they believe, what they think is important, and how those influence their day-to-day lives.

The Learning Process within Challenging RE – Key Stage 1

Learning and growing through Challenging RE (academic rigour and personal development)

Learning can start from any of the three questions.



Key Stage 1		
Learning Process		
Pupil experience	Identify	pupils recognise what is significant to them in their immediate experience and recognise some basic concepts used to express this.
	Explore	pupils learn how 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.
	Contextualise	pupils learn to see their own experience in the light of their own background and compare this sensitively with the experience of other pupils in the class.
	Reflect	pupils learn to think about their experience and the related feelings and to see how these affect themselves and others.
Religious/worldview context	Investigate	pupils learn about related experiences and concepts within the religions explored.
	Contextualise	pupils learn to see the religious experience in the context of the beliefs and practices of the religion being explored, and the feelings that arise from them for believers.
	Reflect	pupils learn to think about the religious experience and concepts and their significance to the believers, and to see how these make a difference to how they live.
	Respond	pupils learn how to express sensitively and in a variety of ways their own views about the religious experiences and concepts.
	Synthesise	pupils learn to identify similarities and differences between their own experience and the religious beliefs practises and concepts they have explored.
Universal Human	Reflect	pupils learn to think about what they can take from their learning about the religions to help them understand their own experience feelings and beliefs.
	Apply	pupils relate the religious experience, beliefs and concepts they have explored to their own lives and think about how their own ideas have developed.

Context: An exploration of home life and how this influences the beliefs, attitudes and behaviours of children and others in relation to their sense of self, belonging and celebrating what is important in life.

4.4. Lower Key Stage 2: Exploring Religions, Experience and Beliefs:

Over the course of LKS2, pupils will explore:

- Christianity plus one different Abrahamic religion and one Dharmic tradition in depth. (The syllabus recommends Islam and Hindu Dharma.)
- With reference to one other religious tradition and non-religious perspectives.

Context: An exploration of what people believe to be important in life and why, and how this is expressed.

Core Questions:

- What is most important in life?
- How do different religions show what is most important to them?
- How does this affect their attitudes and behaviour towards themselves, other people, and the world around them?

The school should build an appropriate curriculum for the pupils and the school, that is ambitious progressive, sequential and coherent over the course of Years 3 and 4, using the following enquiries and ensuring the due emphasis the syllabus places on Christianity (see p8). The enquiries can be in any order the school chooses, and even spilt to create the best learning for the pupils.

This can be planned, for example, by learning the basic concepts and content for each enquiry in Year 3 and then revisiting this in Year 4 to apply that knowledge to answer the main enquiry question. Or schools might choose to plan the enquiries by each religion separately.

Enquiries: (referring back to the core questions)

- How and why do people worship? (Worship).
- Are places of worship really needed? (Religious buildings).
- What holds communities together? (Religion in the community).
- How do religions express their beliefs about God? (Symbolism).
- Why are sacred texts and holy books so important? (Sacred Texts).
- What do our celebrations show about what we think is important in life? (Festivals).

In exploring these questions, **the children will also reflect on:**

- Their own sense of who they are and their uniqueness as a person in a family, community, and world.
- What they believe, what they think is important and how these influences their day-to-day lives.

The Learning Process within Challenging RE – Lower Key Stage 2

Learning and growing through Challenging RE (academic rigour and personal development)

Learning can start from any of the three questions.



Lower Key Stage 2		
Learning Process		
Pupil experience	Identify	pupils learn to identify what is most important to them in terms of people, places, celebrations and beliefs.
	Explore	pupils learn to ask thoughtful and searching questions about their own views about what is important to them and why.
	Contextualise	pupils compare and contrast their own views with those of others in the class.
	Reflect	pupils think about how these different 'values' affect their own and other peoples' lives.
Religious/worldview context	Investigate	pupils learn how to inquire into what religions and traditions hold to be most important and how these are expressed personally and in the community.
	Contextualise	pupils relate religious beliefs to the practices, lifestyles and attitudes of the religions explored, learning to identify differences and similarities between religions.
	Reflect	pupils learn to consider what is important to religious people through their exploration of religious beliefs, concepts and practices and how these compare with their own.
	Respond	pupils explain their responses to the beliefs and practices, giving reasons for their views.
	Synthesise	pupils think about what the beliefs and practices show about what is important to human beings.
Universal Human	Reflect	pupils reflect on what they have learned about what people and communities see as of great importance in life.
	Apply	pupils consider how their views on what is important in life may have developed through their study of these religions and worldviews.

Context: An exploration of what people believe to be important in life, and why and how this is expressed.

4.5. Upper Key Stage 2: Exploring and Reflecting on Religions, Worldviews, and Beliefs:

Over the course of UKS2, pupils will explore:

- Christianity plus one other Abrahamic religion and Dharmic tradition. These could be a continuation of LKS2, or different. (The syllabus recommends continuing with Islam and Hindu Dharma).
- With reference to Humanism and other religious traditions as appropriate.

Context: A reflective exploration of some of the big questions, beliefs, and concepts about life and what it means to be human, and how responses to these are expressed through ritual and ways of living.

Core Questions:

- What do people believe about life, the world, and the good life?
- Where do these beliefs, attitudes and ways of living come from?
- How are these expressed and lived out in the lives of individuals and communities?

The school should build an appropriate curriculum for the pupils and the school, that is ambitious, progressive, sequential, and coherent over the course of Years 5 and 6, using the following enquiries and ensuring the due emphasis the syllabus places on Christianity (see p8). The enquiries can be in any order the school chooses, and even split to create the best learning for the pupils.

This can be planned, for example, by learning the basic concepts and content for each enquiry in Year 5 and then revisiting this in Year 6 to apply that knowledge to answer the main enquiry question. Or schools might choose to plan the enquiries by each religion separately.

Enquiries: (referring back to the core questions)

- Why do religions or non-religious groups celebrate important moments in life? (Rites of Passage).
- Why is pilgrimage so important to some religious communities? (Pilgrimage).
- Why don't all members of a religious or non-religious community believe and live in the same ways? (Diversity).
- How did the religions and worldviews begin? (Founders and Prophets / Roots).

- How does what we believe influence the way we should treat the world? (Creation and environment).
- What do the religious and non-religious worldviews teach about ‘the good life’? (Ethics).

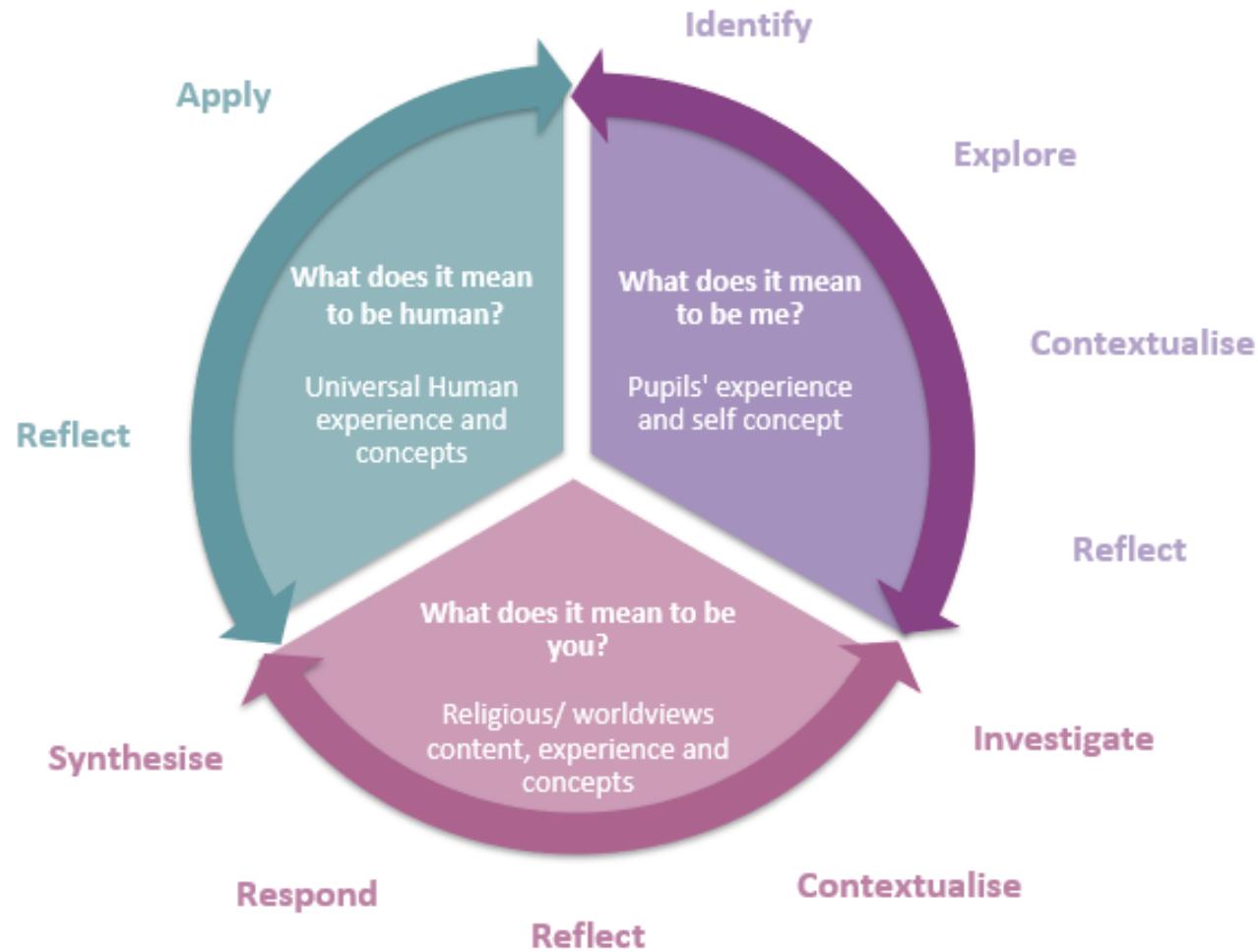
In exploring these aspects of the religions, the children will also reflect on:

- Their own sense of who they are and their uniqueness as a person in a family, community, and world.
- What they believe, what they think is important, and how these influences their day-to-day living.

The Learning Process within Challenging RE – Upper Key Stage 2

Learning and growing through Challenging RE (academic rigour and personal development)

Learning can start from any of the three questions.



Upper Key Stage 2

Learning Process

Pupil experience	Identify	pupils identify their own responses to some of the big questions that life can throw at us.
	Explore	pupils ask thoughtful and searching questions about their own responses to some of the Ultimate Questions raised through the material studied.
	Contextualise	pupils compare and contrast their own response with those of others in the class.
	Reflect	pupils consider why there are different responses to ultimate questions.
Religious/worldview context	Investigate	pupils learn how to enquire into the religious and non-religious beliefs, practices, and concepts and to explore what they reveal about different responses to ultimate questions.
	Contextualise	pupils relate religious beliefs to the practices, lifestyles and attitudes of the religions explored learning to identify differences and similarities between and within religions.
	Reflect	pupils consider how the religious and non-religious beliefs, concepts and lifestyles relate to responses to ultimate questions.
	Respond	pupils consider the extent to which the religious beliefs and concepts express a reasonable response to the ultimate questions.
	Synthesise	pupils relate the religious beliefs concepts and practices that they have explored to their own experience and views, and consider their own beliefs, values, and way of living in the light of these.
Universal Human	Reflect	pupils reflect on what they have learned and what this might suggest about common human values, responsibilities, and experience.
	Apply	pupils consider how their understanding of the world may have developed through their exploration of the religions and worldviews.

Context: A reflective exploration of some of the big questions, beliefs, and concepts about life and what it means to be human, and how responses to these are expressed.

4.6. Key Stage 3: Engaging with Worldviews and Ultimate Questions in the Modern World:

Over the course of KS3, pupils will study:

- Christianity and two other faiths, at least one from Dharmic traditions, (the agreed syllabus recommends Buddhism and Sikhi) plus Humanism in depth
- With reference to other religious and non-religious worldviews as appropriate.

The Agreed Syllabus is based on the expectation of a three-year KS3.

Context: A critical engagement with ultimate questions and global issues, exploring, analysing, and responding to a range of responses to these.

Core Questions:

- What place do religions and worldviews have in the modern world?
- How do we make sense of life and the world?
- How do our responses to these questions influence the ways we live our lives?

Schools use the following enquiries to construct an ambitious, progressive, sequential and coherent curriculum appropriate to their pupils, bearing in mind the requirements of a broad and balanced curriculum and ensuring the due emphasis the syllabus places on Christianity (see page 8).

Schools can combine aspects of these enquiries to form school designed enquiries. These could be thematic explorations as per enquiries 1-12, or systematic studies of each religion or worldview separately, covering the questions contained in the thematic enquiries (but note that 11 & 12 require a range of worldviews), or a combination of both.

Enquiries: (referring back to the Core Questions)

1. Does belief in 'God' still make sense? - Christianity, (Buddhism), Humanism.
2. What is 'Truth' and why is it important? -Christianity, (Buddhism), rationalism.
3. What is knowledge? – Christianity, (Buddhism), Humanism.
4. What does it mean to be human? - Christianity, (Sikhi), Humanism.

5. Does science prove religion is wrong? - Christianity, (Buddhism), materialism.
6. How do we decide what is right and wrong? - Christianity, (Sikhi), Humanism.
7. How can prayer and worship serve any purpose? - Christianity, (Buddhism), (Sikhi), Humanism.
8. Is it possible to make sense of evil and suffering? - Christianity, (Buddhism), Humanism.
9. What do we mean by a just and fair world and is it possible to create one? - Christianity, (Sikhi), Humanism.
10. What responsibility do humans have towards the natural world? - Christianity, (Sikhi), Non-religious worldviews.
11. One truth or many? How can we live together with people with different worldviews? - Christianity, (Sikhi), non-religious worldviews).
12. Is religion still relevant? - Christianity, (Buddhism), (Sikhi), Humanism).
13. [What does it mean to be a Christian in the modern world?](#)
14. [What does it mean to be a Buddhist in the modern world?](#)
15. [What does it mean to be a Sikh in the modern world?](#)
16. [What does it mean to be a Humanist in the modern world?](#)

The Learning Process within Challenging RE – Key Stage 3

Learning and growing through Challenging RE (academic rigour and personal development)

Learning can start from any of the three questions.



Key Stage 3		
Learning Process		
Pupil experience	Identify	pupils recognise which aspects of their own worldview arise out of responses to ultimate questions.
	Explore	pupils ask thoughtful and searching questions about their own and other people's worldviews expressed in responses to ultimate questions.
	Contextualise	pupils recognise and reflect on aspects of their own background and experience that have influenced the development of their worldview.
	Reflect	pupils consider how their own worldview relates to those of others in the class and how and why they are similar or different.
Religious/worldview context	Investigate	pupils explore the concepts and ideas expressed in beliefs, practices and ways of living enshrined in institutional religion/worldviews.
	Contextualise	pupils relate different responses to and/or expressions of ultimate questions to differences of experience, interpretation, and practice within and between religions/worldviews.
	Reflect	pupils reflect on the concepts that underpin responses to ultimate questions in the context of institutional and personal worldviews
	Respond	pupils learn to evaluate responses to and expressions of ultimate questions using empathy and reasoned argument.
	Synthesise	pupils relate the responses to ultimate questions to their own experience and ideas and consider any similarities and/or differences and how these might/might not be significant.
Universal Human	Reflect	pupils reflect on what they have learnt about concepts underpinning different responses to or expressions of ultimate questions and how these relate to our understanding of what it means to be a person.
	Apply	pupils apply what they have learned to their own experience and self-understanding and consider how, if at all, this might affect their self-understanding and their understanding of others.

Context: A critical engagement with ultimate questions and global issues, exploring, analysing, and responding to a range of responses to these.

4.7. Key Stage 4

RE at Key Stage 4 is statutory for all pupils (see page 8) and what follows provides a choice regarding how the school can plan for an appropriate curriculum for its pupils.

Either

Students may follow a specification from an accredited course in RE or RS from one of the recognised examination boards.

Or

follow the principles of this syllabus, as set out below, to create an ambitious, progressive, sequential and coherent curriculum.

GCSE

Schools may wish to:

- enter all students for GCSE or another accredited course in RS, or
- some for an option in GCSE RS alongside a Core RE programme based on this syllabus for everyone, or
- all students following a Core RE curriculum based on this syllabus.

Buckinghamshire SACRE strongly encourages all secondary schools to give students the option to follow an accredited course leading to a qualification at the end of their KS4.

At KS4, (statutory core RE) pupils will explore:

- Christianity and two or three other worldviews in depth, of which one must be non-religious with reference to other religious and non-religious worldviews as appropriate

Context: A critical analysis of questions arising from and issues relating to religious and non-religious worldviews, analysing, and evaluating the impact they have on the modern world.

Core Questions:

- To what extent are religions and worldviews a positive or negative force in the world?
- What is our vision for the world?

Principles for planning General RE at KS4:

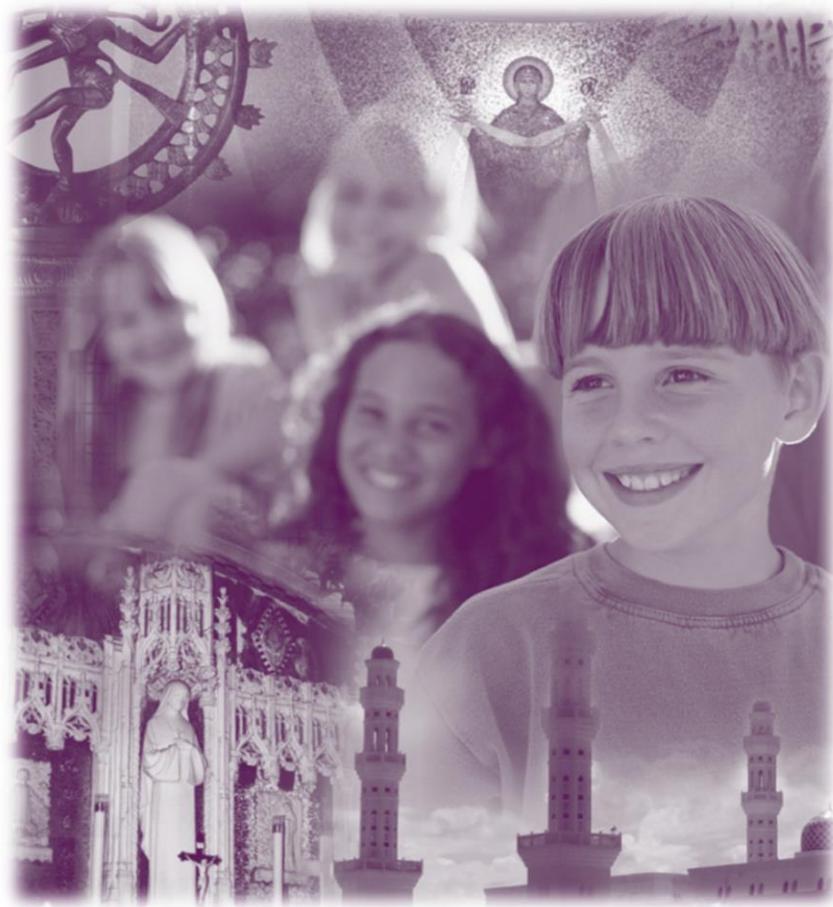
The Agreed Syllabus requires schools to provide students with the opportunity to:

- Understand the nature, role and significance of religion and belief in the world.
- Reflect on questions of meaning, purpose, and value.
- Formulate reasoned opinion/argument and handle controversial issues and truth claims.
- Enter into meaningful dialogue with people of different beliefs and backgrounds, appreciating and celebrating diversity, recognising what we hold in common, and respecting a shared humanity that can be experienced, expressed, and responded to in diverse ways.

All planned learning must:

- Draw on the experience and ideas of the students.
- Relate to appropriate religious and non-religious worldviews content.
- Develop the students' experience and ideas in relation to the religious content
- Ensure coherence and progression and a sense of challenging and worthwhile learning for KS4 students.

Over the course of the Key Stage, **students must be given the opportunity to enquire into each of the nine areas below**, though not necessarily in equal depth. The examples are for exemplification only and others may be pursued according to the interests and backgrounds of the students.



How do religion and belief influence individuals and communities?		
Area 1	Area 2	Area 3
<p>Religion, belief, and the home</p> <p><i>For example:</i></p> <p>Is it right to raise children in a religion? Does religion have anything worthwhile to say about families? 'A family that prays together, stays together.' How important are shared beliefs, practices, and values in a family?</p>	<p>Religion and belief in the community</p> <p><i>For example:</i></p> <p>How do we combat prejudice and discrimination? What role do celebrations play in holding communities together? Is diversity something to be celebrated? How are religion and belief portrayed in the media?</p>	<p>Religion, belief, and the individual</p> <p><i>For example:</i></p> <p>Does being religious mean losing your personal freedom? How free should people be to express their faith and/or belief? Does religious experience make sense?</p>

How do religion and belief respond to ultimate questions of identity, meaning, purpose and value?		
Area 4	Area 5	Area 6
<p>Religion, belief, and moral values</p> <p><i>For example:</i></p> <p>Are there any moral absolutes? Can there be morality without 'God'? How can all faiths and beliefs live peacefully together?</p>	<p>Religion, belief, and human identity</p> <p><i>For example:</i></p> <p>Are humans more important than other animals? What does it mean to be human? Is death the end? How are religion and belief portrayed in the media?</p>	<p>Religion, belief, and the cosmos</p> <p><i>For example:</i></p> <p>Is science enough to explain life? Is God just 'a concept by which we measure our pain'? Is there more to life than our physical existence?</p>

What do religion and belief have to say about moral issues?

Area 7

Religion and life issues

For example:

Should we be able to choose when and how to die?

Is Veganism the only hope for the future?

Turn the other cheek, or an eye for an eye?

Area 8

Religion and relationships

For example:

Should religion define our attitudes to sexual relationships?

Is masculinity toxic?

Is family the building block of society?

If so, who decides what family life should be like?

Area 9

Religion and global issues

For example:

Human Rights or human responsibilities?

Whose world is it anyway?

Is equality possible?

Explored through a study of Christianity and two or three other worldviews in depth, of which one must be non-religious, and with reference to other religious and non-religious worldviews as appropriate.

4.8. RE in the Sixth Form:

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 - Discrete lessons of General RE (perhaps rotating with other aspects of general education).

Option 4 - As part of a General Studies course.

Option 5 - RE drop-down/workshop days.

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.

Buckinghamshire SACRE 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.

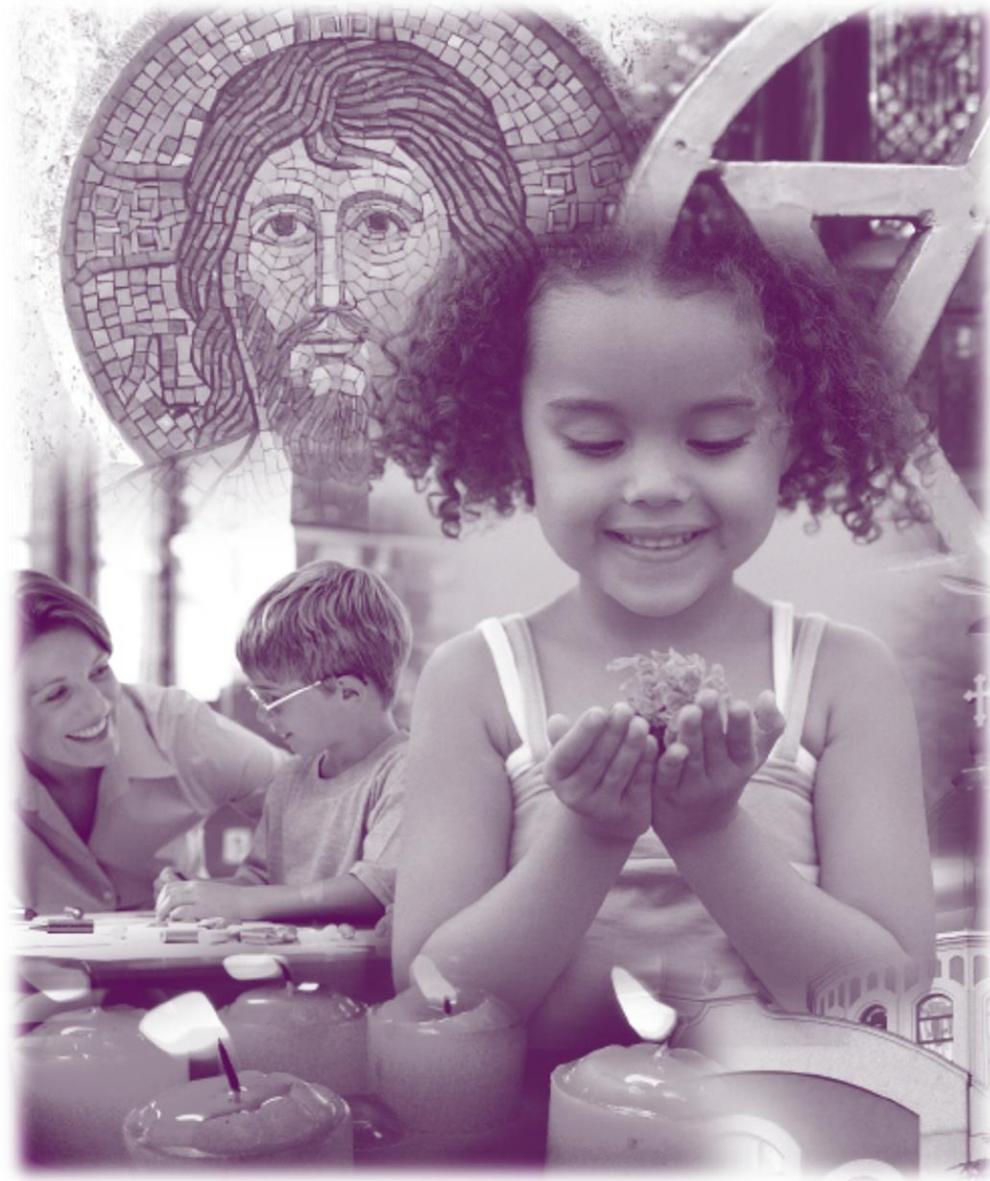
All non-examination, core RE in the Sixth Form must meet the requirements set out in the principles below. The expected minimum time for general RE in Year 12 is 10 hours over the year e.g., the equivalent of two-day conferences; in Year 13 is 5 hours – e.g., the equivalent of 1 full day or 2 half day conferences.

Each learning experience or chunk of learning must meet the aims of the Agreed Syllabus (see 3.1) and:

- Draw on the experience and ideas of the students.
- Relate to appropriate religious, philosophical, ethical, and social content.
- Develop the students' experience and ideas in relation to the religious and philosophical content through exploring faith, belief, and worldviews from around the world.

Themes that schools may explore with their students might include:

- The nature of religion and its place in the modern world.
- Worldviews in the media and the arts.
- Religion, worldviews, and ethical issues.
- Religion, worldviews, and philosophy.
- Religion, science, and technology.
- Religion and worldviews in the news.
- Britain as a multi-religious, multi-secular society.



5. Progression and Assessment:

5.1 Progression

'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 and assessment of learning. Above all, regardless of the ability of the pupil, it enables teachers to construct meaningful learning experiences for, and develop higher order thinking skills in, their pupils. The structure that follows consists of separate sections to help teachers 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 different ways within the Agreed Syllabus:

1. The **aims** of the Agreed Syllabus help planning age-appropriate learning (puts key stage learning into context).
2. The development of learning in RE through the **learning process** for each key stage; (helps make expectations clear to pupils).
3. Non-statutory **End of Key Stage Statements** to help with reporting and clarifying expectations. These might help, for example, where a school uses such methods as 'working towards, at and beyond'.

Progression is about planning learning experiences that will challenge pupils appropriately so that they gain in skills and attitudes 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 pupils gain maximum benefit.

5.2. Assessment

Assessment is a statutory requirement of the Agreed Syllabus. Schools are required to report pupil attainment and progress to parents annually in all subjects including RE, in line with DfE requirements. We encourage schools to use the progression statements and end of Key Stage statements to measure and report progress, but schools should adapt this to their whole-school assessment and reporting policy as far as is practicable. RE should be no different from any other subject in terms of assessment.

High-quality assessment in RE uses assessment sufficiently, but not excessively. Most assessment should be formative (assessment for learning) and there should be no more than 5 formal summative assessments (assessment of learning) across each of Key Stages 2 and 3, and fewer in Key Stage 1. Most assessment should be through tasks and quizzes planned into the learning itself rather than end of unit assessments/tests.

Please note that there are aspects of RE, such as personal development and personal beliefs and attitudes, that cannot and should not be assessed in themselves.

5.3. Progression through the aims of the Agreed Syllabus

Aims	Key Stage 1 pupils	Lower KS2 pupils	Upper KS2 pupil
To understand the nature, role and influence of religion and worldviews locally, nationally, and globally, pupils:	Show basic knowledge and understanding of Christianity and at least one other faiths and worldviews, exploring similarities and differences between them.	Consider the nature and interpretation of sources of authority in Christianity, other faiths, and worldviews. Explore similarities and differences within religions and worldviews.	Understand what it means to be religious, and the influence religions and worldviews have on individuals and communities. Consider different responses two ultimate questions
To reflect on questions of meaning, purpose, and value pupils:	Reflect on personal experience and say how it is linked to feelings and opinions. Appreciate the experiences, feelings, and opinions of others.	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.
To formulate reasoned opinion and argument pupils:	Give one or more reasons for an opinion, based on appropriate factual knowledge and understanding.	Gain basic understanding of some beliefs to be able to give valid reasons for and against an opinion.	Show awareness of the ways beliefs influence attitudes, way of life and behaviour. Express and justify their own beliefs and opinions and listen sensitively to those of others. Distinguish between valid and invalid arguments.

Aims	Key Stage 3 pupils	Key Stage 4 pupils
<p>To understand the nature, role and influence of religion and worldviews locally, nationally, and globally, pupils:</p>	<p>Analyse and think critically about religious and other beliefs and practises and different interpretations of these</p> <p>Evaluate the benefits and challenges of living in a multi faith and diverse society</p>	<p>Analyse and evaluate the significance of religion and worldviews in the modern world</p>
<p>To reflect on questions of meaning, purpose, and value pupils:</p>	<p>Raise and explore the ultimate questions which are contained in religious beliefs and practices and non-religious worldviews.</p> <p>Develop personal responses to ultimate questions in the light of their own and others' experiences and beliefs.</p> <p>Relate a range of textual sources and narratives to beliefs, practices, and ultimate questions, showing understanding of different interpretations.</p>	<p>Reflect on their own and others' responses, religious and secular, to ultimate questions, analysing the impact these can have in the world.</p>
<p>To formulate reasoned opinion and argument pupils:</p>	<p>See things from other peoples' perspective.</p> <p>Build valid arguments using questions, interpretation, reasoning, and justification.</p> <p>Analyse strengths and weaknesses in arguments/stances to arrive at independent conclusions.</p>	<p>Evaluate the impact these responses can have in the world considering the strength or otherwise of different views and responses.</p> <p>Hypothesise about the impact that different beliefs, attitudes, and lifestyles might have on others and the world.</p>

6. Inclusion and Children with Special Educational Needs

The Buckinghamshire 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:

- Setting suitable learning challenges.
- Responding to pupils' diverse learning needs.
- 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 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 to meet the needs of the children. This includes meeting the 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.

6.1 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:

- Be sensitive to and meet the needs of the individual child.
- Set challenging tasks but have realistic expectations of what she/he can do and celebrate this.
- Make the pupils' experience of RE meaningful taking account of their 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.

For some, using 'stilling' activities for quiet reflection and to deepen imagination may be appropriate.

Some will require low-stimulus and others a multi-sensory approach will be helpful, using music, art, costume, or persona dolls.

For many, the use of story and narrative expressed in a range of contexts will be helpful.

Wherever possible, engagement with people and places will enhance their learning experience.

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.

It is suggested that teachers use resources that best meet the needs of the child. Where pupils have difficulties with factual knowledge, books should be used sparingly. Artefacts that stimulate the senses, role-play, social stories, and careful use of visits and visitors will prove more effective.

The teacher should choose appropriate content from the units of the Syllabus. For example, in Rites of Passage (KS2), birth and marriage may be nearer the pupils' own experience than initiation rites. Again, the teacher's professional judgement and personal knowledge of the pupils will come into play.

Similarly, studying more than one additional religion may overload some pupils with facts, so if appropriate, only one religion may be studied. (NB care must then be taken to ensure that the school meets the statutory requirement that Christianity should predominate, but that other religions are studied.)

Appendix 1 Progression:

1.1 Progression through the Learning Process

Learning Process Progression KS1-UKS2		KS1	LKS2	UKS2	KS3
Pupil experience	Identify	Pupils recognise what is significant to them in their immediate experience and recognise some basic concepts used to express this	Peoples learn to identify what is most important to them in terms of people places celebrations and beliefs	Pupils identify their own responses to some of the big questions that life can throw at us	Recognise which aspects of their own worldview arise out of responses to ultimate questions
	Explore	Pupils learn how 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	Pupils learn to ask thoughtful and searching questions about their own views about what is important to them and why	Pupils ask thoughtful and searching questions about their own responses to some of the ultimate questions raised through the material studied	Ask thoughtful and searching questions about their own and other people's worldviews expressed in responses to ultimate questions
	Contextualise	Pupils learn to see their own experience in the light of their own background and compare this sensitively with the experience of other pupils in the class	Pupils compare and contrast their own views with those of others in the class	Pupils compare and contrast their own response with those of others in the class	Recognise and reflect on aspects of their own background and experience that have influenced the development of their worldview
	Reflect	Pupils learn to think about their experience and the feelings related and to see how these affect themselves and others	Pupils think about how these different 'values' affect their own and other peoples' lives	Pupils consider why these are different responses to ultimate questions	Consider how their own worldview relates to those of others in the class and how and why they are similar or different
Religious/world view context	Investigate	Pupils learn about related experiences and concepts within the religions explored	Pupils learn how to inquire into what do religions and traditions hold to be most important and how these are expressed personally and in the community	Pupils learn how to enquire into the religious and non-religious beliefs, practises and concepts and to explore what they reveal about different responses to ultimate questions	Pupils explore the concepts and ideas expressed in beliefs, practices and ways of living enshrined in institutional religion/worldviews

Learning Process Progression KS1-UKS2		KS1	LKS2	UKS2	KS3
Religious/worldview context	Contextualise	Pupils learn to see the religious experience in the context of the beliefs and practises of the religion being explored and the feelings that arise from them for believers	Pupils relate religious beliefs to the practises, lifestyles and attitudes of the religions explored learning to identify differences and similarities between religions	Pupils relate religious beliefs and concepts to the practises, lifestyles and attitudes of the religions and beliefs explored and the differences and similarities between religions	Pupils relate different responses to and/or expressions of ultimate questions to differences of experience, interpretation and practice within and between religions/worldviews
	Reflect	Pupils learn to think about the religious experience and concepts and their significance to the believers and to see how these make a difference to how they live	Pupils learn to consider what is important to religious people through their exploration of religious beliefs concepts and practises and how these compare with their own	Pupils consider how the religious and non-religious beliefs concepts and lifestyles relate to responses to ultimate questions	Pupils reflect on the concepts that underpin responses to ultimate questions in the context of institutional and personal worldviews
	Respond	Pupils learn how to express sensitively and in a variety of ways their own views about the religious experiences and concepts	Pupils explain their responses to the beliefs and practises giving reasons for their views	Pupils consider the extent to which the religious beliefs and concepts express a reasonable response to the ultimate questions	Pupils learn to evaluate religious responses to and expressions of ultimate questions using empathy and reasoned argument
	Synthesise	Pupils learn to identify similarities and differences between their own experience and the religious beliefs practises and concepts they have explored	Pupils think about what the beliefs and practises show about what is important to human beings	Pupils relate to the religious beliefs concepts and practises that they have explored to their own experience and views, and consider their own beliefs, values and way of living in the light of these	Pupils relate the religious responses to ultimate questions to their own experience and ideas and consider any similarities and/or differences and how these might/might not be significant
Universal Human Experience	Reflect	Pupils learn to think about what they can take from their learning about the religions to help them understand their own experience feelings and beliefs	Pupils reflect on what they have learned about what people and communities see as of great importance in life	Pupils reflect on what they have learned and what these might suggest about common human values, responsibilities and experience	Pupils reflect on what they have learnt about concepts underpinning different responses to or expressions of ultimate questions and how these relate to our understanding of what it means to be a person
	Apply	Pupils relate the religious experience, beliefs and concepts they have explored to their own lives and think about how their own ideas have developed	Pupils consider how their views on what is important in life may have developed through their study of these religions and world views	Pupils consider how their understanding of the world may have developed through their exploration of the religions and worldviews	Pupils apply what they have learned to their own experience and self-understanding and consider how, if at all, this might affect their self-understanding and their understanding of others

1.2 Age-related Expectations

Pupils will be 'emerging', 'achieving' or 'exceeding' or similar judgements according to school policy. This is for summative assessment, taking an overview of a pupil's work and achievement over time and where appropriate specific assessment tasks/tests.

KS1	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Pupils can retell stories from different religions and traditions and explain what they think it teaches people.2. They recognise some religious phenomena and can say what religion these are from and say something about their meaning.3. They can recognise that religions share things in common and have real differences.4. They can talk about what is important to themselves and others and give a reason why.5. Pupils ask appropriate questions about the religions they explore and can give a good reason for their own and other people's beliefs and opinions.
LKS2	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Pupils describe beliefs and teachings from Christianity and two other religions and show how these influence how people live and behave.2. They recognise and can describe symbols and rituals from Christianity and two other religions and say something about what these mean for people.3. They recognise different religions and can compare different beliefs and teachings about God, the world and humanity from Christianity and two or three other religions studied.4. They recognise who and what inspires themselves and others and say something about how this affects their behaviour.5. They ask questions about religion and belief that help them find out more about Christianity and two or three different beliefs and practices, comparing these with their own ideas.
UKS2	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Pupils describe similarities and differences of belief and practice within and between Christianity and two or three different religions and show how these influence the lives of individuals and communities.2. They use correct vocabulary to suggest meanings for different ways in which people show their religious beliefs.3. They raise questions about beliefs, values and how people live their lives and are able to research what different religions and a non-religious view say about important beliefs, ideas and issues, including the sources of authority such as sacred texts and key figures.4. They recognise different sources of inspiration and influence on people's lives and can discuss the positive and negative impact these might have on individuals and communities.5. They can discuss the impact of religion on individuals and communities and support their views with good reasons linked to evidence and examples
KS3	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Pupils use religious and philosophical language and concepts to explain religions, beliefs, practices and values, including differences within religions and similarities shared across religions and non-religious worldviews.2. Pupils can explain and interpret different forms of religious and spiritual expression.3. Pupils explain different interpretations of religious and non-religious beliefs and research different perspectives on issues and ideas.4. Pupils consider different responses to and insights about questions of identity, meaning, purpose and value found in Christianity and other faith and non-religious worldviews, arguing their own views in the light of this.5. Pupils explain some challenges of living in a multi-faith and belief society and the impact of commitment on the lives of individuals and communities.
KS4	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Pupils use a wide range of language, ideas, approaches and methods to analyse and demonstrate a broad understanding of religions and beliefs and their significance in modern society.2. Pupils can pull together evidence and insights from religion and other disciplines to explore what it means to be human.3. Pupils can explain how different interpretations of religious and non-religious views may be brought together to share insights about meaning, purpose and values.4. Pupils relate a wide range of perspectives from religions and non-religious worldviews to contemporary social and moral issues, demonstrating understanding of the diversity of views within and between them.5. Pupils arrive at independent conclusions based on research into & evidence about religion and belief and their impact, positive & negative, on communities & society.

Appendix 2: Different Approaches to Learning and Teaching in RE

The Buckinghamshire 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 their 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 religious and non-religious worldviews.
- **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 religious and non-religious worldviews and reflect on the light this sheds on their own worldview and experience.
- **The Conceptual Approach** where the pupils explore the concepts of religious and non-religious worldviews 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 religious and non-religious worldviews 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 and non-religious worldviews responses to the questions that life throws at us.
- **The multi-disciplinary approach**, using 'lenses' through which to explore and research aspects of religion and belief based on academic disciplines. These are, most frequently, Theology, Philosophy, Social/Human Sciences, but can equally be Linguistics, Aesthetics, Creative and Expressive Arts.

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. What is most important is identifying which approaches are best suited to achieving the particular purposes of the RE that is being taught and the needs of the pupils. It is a good idea to be clear about these, sharing them with pupils to aid their learning.

Appendix 3: Concepts in RE

In Challenging RE, we have identified some key concepts that are explored through the key stages. Below are some illustrative universal human concepts, general religious concepts and disciplinary concepts.

Universal Human Concepts such as				General Religious Concepts such as	
Identity	Autonomy	Freedom	Suffering	God/Deity	Faith
Authority	Truth	Justice	Fulfilment	Sacred	Belief
Destiny	Knowledge Reason	Motivation	Unity	Salvation	Orthodoxy
Reality	Mystery	Peace	Ideology	Religion	Fundamentalism
Origin	Wonder	Relationship	Initiation	Revelation	Liberalism
Value	Celebration	Spirituality	Lifestyle	Transcendence	Spiritual
Purpose	Morality	Devotion	Symbolism	Monotheism	Worship
Human Nature	Worldview	Commitment		Polytheism	Ritual
Significance	Good/Evil	Community		Commandments	Interpretation
Belonging				Creation	Holy Book

Each enquiry at all key stages, helps to explore one or more of these concepts

Disciplinary Concepts such as	
<p>Theology - exploring religious concepts and ideas</p> <p>Philosophy – asking fundamental questions</p> <p>Ethics – theories of morality</p> <p>Social Sciences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sociology – the study of society and social forces • Psychology – the study of the mind • History – the study of the past and its influence 	<p>And as pupils mature in their academic development:</p> <p>Epistemology – theories of knowledge</p> <p>Aesthetics – theories of art and beauty</p> <p>Ontology – the nature of reality</p> <p>Existentialism – ideas about existence and life-stance</p>

As pupils progress through their education, these can be introduced in an age-appropriate way. Thus, for example, in KS1 teachers can say that pupils will imagine they are a theologian (a scholar of religion) or philosopher (a scholar of ideas), and this will help them to ask those types of question in an age-appropriate way. By the end of KS3 more sophisticated theological and philosophical language is readily used, along with some of the other disciplines.

All **content** (knowledge of specific aspects of religious and non-religious worldviews such as Bible, Hajj, Passover, Brahman, Sewa and Buddha) can be approached from one or more of these disciplines.

Thus, for example, in KS1, the enquiry about 'important places':

- explores and develops understanding of the universal concepts of identity and/or belonging,
- this is done through introducing children to the general religious concept of worship,
- and this is explored through possible religion-specific concepts and content of:
 - Church and Synagogue,
 - Jerusalem,
 - Rituals in the home; Shabbat.

In this way, their learning in the RE classroom is interconnected by the concepts. This is further illustrated in the support materials, along with religion-specific concepts and content by Key Stage.

Religion-specific concepts will be provided separately in the support materials.

Appendix 4: Conceptual Creativity

Central to the approach to learning in the Buckinghamshire 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 with which they can identify and that they can apply to life.

In order to provide opportunities for all children to learn and grow through their Religious Education, we have to take their **own experience** seriously whilst expanding their knowledge, understanding and horizons through the religions and worldviews. In this way they can appreciate the significance of the beliefs, practices and lifestyles found in the principal faiths and worldviews, to life in the modern world and to their own lives. RE moves pupils beyond their own worldview to explore other worldviews and ways of living found in the principal religions and beliefs of humanity – ‘the best which has been thought and said in the world’ – and bringing this to bear on their own worldview and way of living. Pupils are challenged to think reflectively and critically about what they learn, through an exploration of **key questions and concepts**.

The diagrams on the following pages provide a structure to help plan for 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.

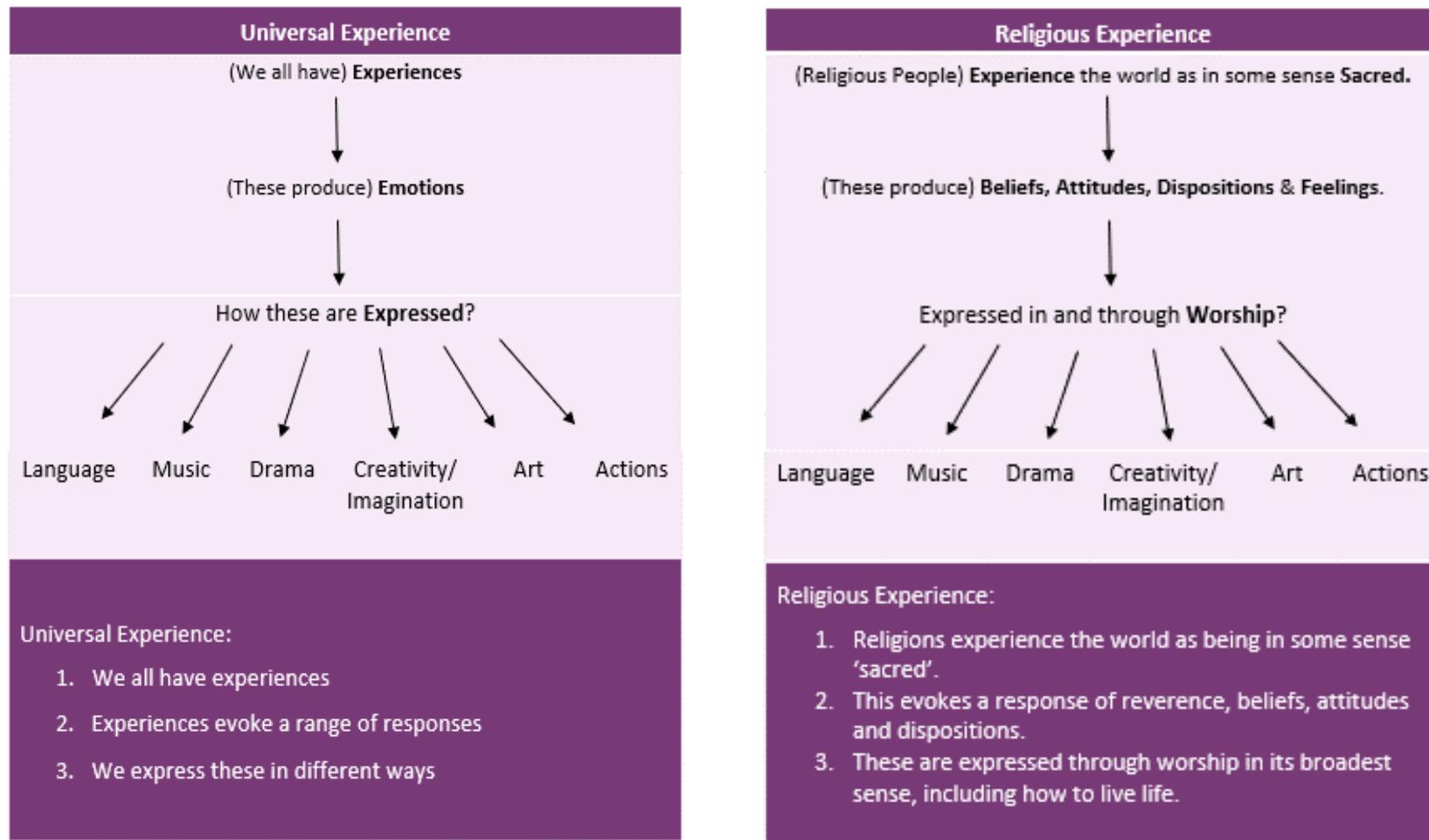
- These experiences evoke a range of responses (feeling, thinking, challenging).
- We need to express these responses and make sense of them and do so in a variety of ways.

The '**religious**' structure on the right of the diagram mirrors the universal structure, but in the context of a faith perspectives: Religions experience the world as being in some sense 'sacred'.

- This evokes such responses as reverence and particular 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: art, music, drama, language, inner creativity and imagination, actions and the way we live our lives; and these can combine in various ways (e.g. words and music = songs).

High quality RE is challenging, engaging and transformative because it engages pupils with the big questions and concepts that help them to make sense of experience and what it means to be human.

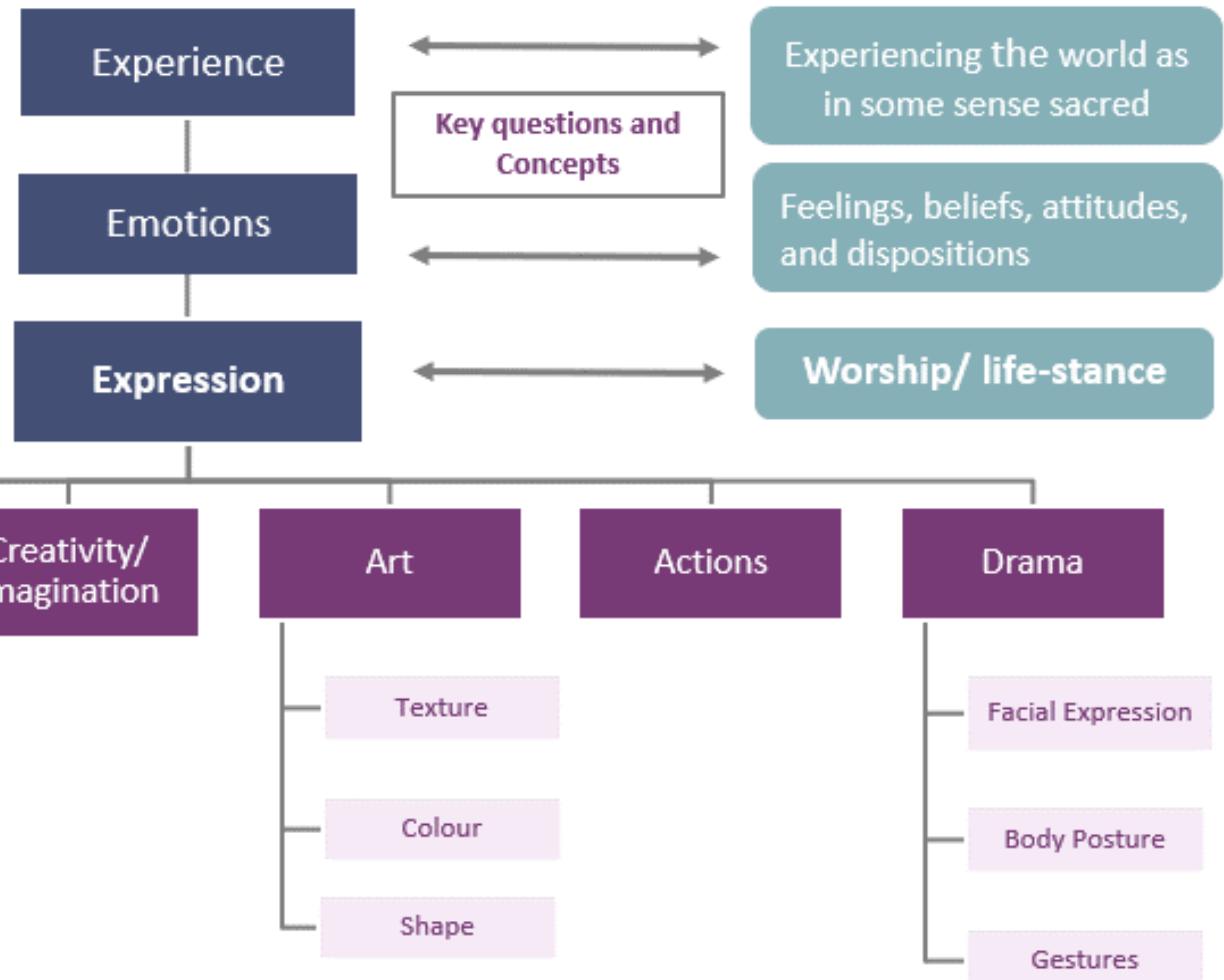


We can now build bridges between the pupils' own experiences and the faith experiences of others through an exploration of questions and concepts. These bridges can start anywhere on the diagram (e.g., music to personal feelings to personal experience and over to religious worship, on to religious belief, 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.**

Model of Conceptual Creativity

This diagram shows how links can be made between:

1. Pupils' feelings, ideas and their experience
2. Pupils' experience and the religious context
3. Beliefs, values and how these are expressed



Appendix 5: Planning in RE

When planning pupils' learning, think of developing an enquiry that can be divided into '**chunks of learning**', which can last from 1 – 3 lessons. Over the course of the enquiry, pupils should consider their own experience/background/perspective, explore the religious/worldview content and reflect on how/whether this can apply universally to humanity. Finally, they should be given the opportunity to reflect on how, if at all, this has developed their own views and why.

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' or enquiry and the learning is driven by the question.
2. Identify **what** you want pupils to learn (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. Specific religious concepts (e.g. agape);
 - c. Universal human experience (e.g. relationship).
5. Establish what religious and other content you want pupils to learn or develop.
 - a. Knowledge and understanding; e.g. parables, stories, beliefs, sacred texts
 - 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 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 (the how of the learning structure).
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 the learning and tasks set, rather than summative - i.e. end of unit).
10. Assess appropriately, using the frameworks in the AS applied in the context of your whole school policy and practice

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.

Appendix 6: Non-statutory Guidance Early Years Foundation Stage

(More examples will be available in the support materials)

Communication and Language ELG: Listening, Attention and Understanding. ELG: Speaking.	Using stories, persona dolls, show and tell to explore how different religions are lived out in the home and their impact on family and home life.
Literacy ELG: Comprehension. ELG: Writing.	Responding to stories, re-telling stories, from different religions and cultures, exploring different ways of life.
Understanding the World ELG: Past and Present. ELG: People, Culture and Communities. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.• Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and – when appropriate – maps.	Learning about some key people from the religions through story – e.g. Jesus, Muhammad (pbuh), Moses, Guru Nanak, Buddha. Important people in the communities – e.g. Vicar, Rabbi, Imam Families in the UK, in India, and how religious celebrations are similar and different.
Expressive Arts and Design ELG: Creating with Materials ELG: Being Imaginative and Expressive	Using art to express what is important to them and to others. Using music, drama and art to retell stories.

Appendix 7: Non-statutory Guidance Key Stage 1

Statutory Enquiries with suggested non-statutory key questions

1. What does it mean to be me? (Who I am).

- I wonder, what makes me, me?
- Who am I important to?
- What do religions say about what people are like and what they should be like?
- What do you think the perfect person would be like? Is it possible to be perfect?

2. How important are the groups people belong to? (Belonging).

- What groups do I belong to and how do they make me feel?
- What does belonging to a group mean to the group members; why is belonging to the group important to them? What do they gain from this?
- What does belonging to a religion mean to religious people; why is belonging to the religion important to them? What do they gain from this?
- How do people show they belong to a religion?
- I wonder, how do the groups we belong to make a difference to who we are?

3. What makes some people so important? (Important people).

- I wonder, who is most important to me and why?
- Who are the really important people in the religions and what makes them so important?
- Who are the important people in the different religious communities and what do they do?
- How can other people influence us?
- How do important people influence the way we behave?

4. Why are some places so important? (Important places).

- Do you have a special place that means a lot to you?
- How do you feel when you are in your special place?

- Which buildings in our local area are important – what makes them important??
- What buildings are important in some religions? Why? What happens there?
- What are the main features of these places of worship?
- I wonder, what do people gain from being together in a shared important place?

5. What makes some things sacred to some groups of people? (Special things).

- Do you have a special object? What makes it special? How does it make you feel?
- What objects are important or sacred in the religions and why?
- How do religious people use them and treat them?
- What beliefs are expressed in the objects?
- What is it about special things that makes them so important to people?
- I wonder, why is it important to show respect and care for things that are important to people?

6. What makes some stories so important to different people? (Sacred books).

- What stories are special to you? What makes them special?
- What stories are important to some religious people and why?
- What message or teaching might these stories have for religious people?
- Are all stories true in the same way?
- I wonder, what can we learn from stories? How might they influence how we behave?

7. Why is it important to look after our world? (The natural world).

- What do you find ‘wonder-full’ in the natural world? Why? Is it important to protect it for your children and their children? How can we do this?
- What do religious stories say about how the world began
- What do creation stories teach some religious people about looking after the world?
- How do the religions celebrate and show thanks for the world?
- What other explanations are there for how the world began?
- I wonder, how should we live together to look after each other and animals?

8. Why do we celebrate important occasions? (Special occasions).

- What important times do I celebrate with my family and friends and why? What beliefs and feelings are expressed on these occasions?
- What makes a good celebration?
- How do some religious people celebrate their important occasions? What beliefs and feelings are expressed on these occasions?
- I wonder why we all have special occasions and why they are important to us?

Appendix 8: Non-statutory Guidance Lower KS2

Statutory Enquiries with suggested non-statutory key questions

1. How and why do people worship? (Worship)

- What is most important to me in my life? (Things, people, ideas, feelings, beliefs)
- How do I express my feelings and beliefs about what I think is important in my life?
- What do religious people do in their worship? Why do they do this?
- Why are beliefs and attitudes important?
- How does worship express different beliefs about God, humans and the world?
- What do believers gain from worshipping on their own (privately) and with other people (in the home or place of worship)?
- How does worship influence their lives?
- How do we show what is most important in our lives and how might this influence how we live and affect other people?

2. Are places of worship really needed? (Religious buildings)

- What different kinds of buildings are there in the local communities? What are they for?
- How do the features of these buildings help them to fulfil their purpose?
- What are the places of worship in the religions called and how are they used?
- What features are found in the different places of worship and what are they used for?
- What role do places of worship play in the lives of the individuals and faith communities?
- How do these places help believers feel closer to God and understand life better?
- What are the differences between private and collective worship? How might believers benefit from each? Do they need to have a public place of worship?
- Why is it important for people to have public buildings in the community? Why not just have homes?
- How important is it for people to have somewhere to go to be on their own? Why?

3. What holds communities together? (Religion in the community)

- What is it like to belong to our class? Our school? What responsibilities do different people in the school have?
- How can belonging to a religion influence the lives of the faith communities?

- How do religious communities live out their beliefs and actions in the wider world?
- What beliefs do the different religions share in common and how are they different?
- What does it mean to be a Christian, a Hindu or a Muslim religion important in the community? Why/why not?
- How does being part of a community influence people's actions, choices and behaviour?
- How can different people and groups live together in communities (local, national, global)?

4. How do religions express their beliefs about God? (Symbolism)

- What does our school badge or motto say about us?
- What is important to me and how can I express my deeply held feelings and beliefs?
- What is the difference between a sign and a symbol? What symbols are important to you?
- What do some religions believe about God?
- How do they express these beliefs through art, language, rituals and symbols?
- How do symbols and language express deep ideas, beliefs and feelings?

5. Why are sacred texts and holy books so important? (Sacred Texts)

- What is your favourite book or story? What are books for and how do we use them?
- How do stories help us understand how we should behave/live our lives?
- What is a sacred text? What sacred texts are important in the religions? How did they come into existence?
- What beliefs about God are expressed in the sacred texts?
- What do different sacred texts say about what it means to be a person?
- What rules for living are found in different sacred texts?
- How might religious people interpret their sacred texts differently?
- How might non-religious people interpret sacred texts? How do they know what their rules for living are?
- Do people need to believe in God in order to be good?

6. What do our celebrations show about what we think is important in life? (Festivals)

- What things do we celebrate? Why? How do we celebrate?
- How do celebrations show what is important in our lives?

- Why do we usually celebrate with other people and not just on our own?
- What are some of the main festivals in the religions?
- How do festivals express important beliefs and events in each religion?
- What value do religious festivals have in the lives of individuals and communities?
- What are the similarities and differences between secular and religious celebrations?
- What makes something worth celebrating?
- What can we learn from this about what people think is really important in life?

Appendix 9: Non-statutory Guidance Upper Key Stage 2

Statutory Enquiries with suggested non-statutory key questions

1. Why do religions and non-religious groups celebrate important moments in life? (Rites of Passage).

- What might the key milestones be in my life and why are they important?
- What/who do I have a commitment to and how do I show this?
- What rites of passage do people observe in religious and non-religious traditions?
- What beliefs about life and commitment are expressed in the rites of passage?
- Why do many people want to involve others in important moments in their lives?
- What can we learn about our own values and commitments from the values, commitments and attitudes of others?
- What benefits and challenges can commitment bring to our lives?

2. Why is pilgrimage important to some religious communities? (Pilgrimage).

- What is the most important or meaningful journey that I have been on? What happened? What was memorable about it? What influence has it had on me?
- What is pilgrimage and why do people choose to go on pilgrimage?
- What happens on different pilgrimages and how do they influence the pilgrims?
- What challenges can the pilgrims face and how do they overcome these
- What value does pilgrimage have in the lives of believers?
- How might pilgrims be different after having completed their pilgrimage?
- How does going on pilgrimage not only express beliefs, but also strengthen them for the pilgrims and even their communities?
- Is there a purpose to life and how can we find out? What helps give meaning and purpose to life?

3. Why don't all members of a religious or non-religious community believe and live in the same ways? (Diversity).

- How am I similar to and different from other people around me? Why can't we all be the same?
- Does it matter that people have views, beliefs and religions that differ from my own? Why?
- What is a 'worldview' and where do we get our worldview from?

- What different views, beliefs and traditions are there within religions and non-religious groups?
- What can we learn about the different beliefs within the religions from their worship, prayer and ritual?
- What holds communities together?
- How might differences enhance the life of a community?

4. How did the religions and worldviews begin? (Founders and Prophets / Roots).

- What does it mean to admire someone? What sort of people do I admire?
- What qualities do we look for in leaders?
- What are the origins of the religions and why are the 'founders' so significant? How do devotees show their devotion to these figures?
- How do the lives, teachings and example of the key religious figures in the different religions influence individuals and faith communities today?
- Are these figures good role models for us today? Why?
- Who are some of the key figures in the development of Humanism? What were their key ideas?
- How important is it for us to have good role models to base our lives on?

5. How does what we believe influence the way we should treat the world? (Creation and environment).

- What do I think caused the universe?
- Does the universe have a purpose or is it just there?
- What do different religions, non-religious groups and scientific views say about how the universe and life came about?
- How do religious /non-religious beliefs and scientific teachings influence people's treatment of the world?
- Do people have a responsibility to care for the world? Why, and what is this?
- If you were to create a new world, what would it look like? What would you leave out and why?
- How important is human life? Why? Is human life more important than all other life? Why/Why not?
- How can humanity work together to improve the natural world? What is stopping us?

6. What do the religious and non-religious worldviews teach about 'the good life'? (Ethics).

- Who and what influences how I live my life? How important is my behaviour?

- What is my personal code of conduct? What are my most important values in life?
- What do the different religious and non-religious teachings say about how we should live our lives? Do they have anything in common?
- How do different religious and non-religious groups decide what is right and wrong?
- How relevant or helpful in modern life are religious teachings about how we should live?
- How can humans live well together?

Appendix 10: Non-statutory guidance KS3

Statutory enquiries with possible key questions (non-statutory)

1. Does belief in 'God' still make sense? - Christianity, (Buddhism), Humanism

- What is 'God'? What do the religions say about the nature and existence of 'God'?
- How are they similar to and different from each other?
- How do they differ within themselves?
- If God is infinite, how can finite human language say anything about God? What do Humanists believe?
- If there is no form of divine power or 'God', how can we make sense of life?
- Does life have any meaning and/or purpose?
- Why do some people believe in 'God' and others don't?
- How does or should belief in 'God' affect the way people live their lives?
- To what extent is atheism or agnosticism a more reasonable life stance?
- Would the world be better if there were no belief in 'God'?
- Would the world be better if everyone believed the same things?

2. What is 'Truth' and why is it important? -Christianity, (Buddhism), rationalism

- In what sense can sacred texts and stories be held to be true?
- What evidence is there for the truth of religious worldviews?
- Is there more to truth than simply being factually correct?
- What makes someone or something an authority on truth?
- What is truth and how do we know? What is real and what is fake? Are there somethings that are true now that will be true for all time?
- What does truth mean in maths, science, literature, the arts, history, philosophy, ethics and religion?
- Is there just one form of truth? How do we decide what is true?
- Does faith provide insights into truth? What is the relationship between knowledge, belief and faith? Can there be any place for revelation?
- Is factual truth sufficient for making sense of and expressing how we experience, understand and respond to the world? is it possible or desirable for everyone to believe the same truth in the same way?

- Why do people disagree about how we should live our lives?
- Why isn't there one right way to live for all people at all times?

3. What is knowledge? – Christianity, (Buddhism), Humanism

- What are ultimate questions?
- What kinds of answer do ultimate questions require?
- What can science and religion tell us about the universe and life? And can they both be held together?
- How is language used in religion and science?
- What is the nature of knowledge, belief and faith?
- What basis is there for our beliefs?
- What is revelation? How reliable is revelation?
- How do our beliefs influence the way we live and behave?

4. What does it mean to be human? - Christianity, (Sikhi), Humanism

- What do some religions teach about what it means to be human?
- What do they teach about what happens when we die?
- Do all members over religion understand these in the same way?
- What do humanists have to say about these questions?
- Is there more to life than just the material and physical?
- Does life have meaning, purpose and value?
- To what extent is human life different from and similar to other animals?
- How important is our sense of identity? Does being human hold innate value and responsibilities?
- What makes me, me, you, you and us human?

5. Does science prove religion is wrong? - Christianity, (Buddhism), materialism

- Has religion got anything meaningful to say about the origins of the universe and of life?
- What is the status of scientific theories about the origins of the universe and of life?

- Are science and religion incompatible?
- Why is there something rather than nothing and why is this an important question, or is not?
- Do we have to have a sense of meaning and purpose?
- Can life have meaning and purpose if it is just a brutal fact?
- Is there any point or purpose or value to life?
- How can science provide a moral code to live by?

6. How do we decide what is right and wrong? - Christianity, (Sikhi), Humanism

- What do the religions and humanism have to say about 'the good life'?
- Does everyone within a religion or worldview have the same understanding of what their worldview says about the good life?
- What might influence a person's understanding of the good life?
- Are all beliefs and theories about right and wrong equally valid?
- What makes something right or wrong? How do we know?
- Is there such a thing as the good life? If so, how can we all live it?
- If everyone just obeyed the law, wouldn't the world be a better place?

7. How can prayer and worship serve any purpose? - Christianity, (Buddhism), (Sikhi), non-religious worldviews

- In what different ways do religious devotees worship and express what is of absolute value or ultimate concern in life?
- What can religious devotees gain from acts of ritual and worship?
- To what extent is it fair to say that such things as our celebrity culture and our desire to define ourselves through our possessions bear any similarity to religious worship?
- What if anything is the point of worship?
- Can humans live without some form of worship or experience of something greater than we are?
- How do we express what is of absolute value or ultimate concern in life?
- How does religious worship compare to modern celebrity culture in terms of values and ways of living? Is there more to life than material and physical needs?

8. Is it possible to make sense of evil and suffering? - Christianity, (Buddhism), Humanism

- How do the religions and humanism explain the existence of evil and suffering?
- To what extent are these explanations adequate?
- How can people believe in God in the face of evil and suffering?
- Does the reality of evil and suffering make belief in God irrational?
- Does belief in God provide I means for facing up to and explaining evil and suffering?
- How can we explain and deal with Evil and suffering? What would life in a world without evil and suffering be like?
- Would a perfect world be desirable or possible?

9. What do we mean by a just and fair world and is it possible to create one? - Christianity, (Sikhi), Humanism

- What do the religions and humanism teach about how we should treat other people? What are human rights and where do they come from? Do we have a responsibility to make life better for other people? If so, why?
- Why should we be concerned about creating a fairer world and a just society?
- Where do our values come from? Is it possible to create a fair and just world?
- Can we agree on what would make a fair and just world?
- Is it desirable to create a fair and just world?
- If these are not possible, should we just give up and simply look after ourselves and our nearest and dearest?

10. What responsibility do humans have towards the natural world? - Christianity, (Sikhi), Non-religious worldviews

- How do religious beliefs and experiences influence people's understanding of human responsibility for the world?
- To what extent do humans have a common responsibility to work towards climate justice?
- How do we balance our needs and our wants with our responsibility to work towards climate justice?
- What prevents people from living up to their beliefs and ideals about climate justice?
- Do religious beliefs and other worldviews really make any difference to how we treat the natural world?
- Should everyone become vegan?
- How far are you prepared to adjust your way of living to ensure global climate justice?

11. One truth or many? How can we live together with people with different worldviews? - Christianity, (Sikhi), non-religious worldviews

- What do the religions and world views teach about living with people who have different beliefs and lifestyles from their own?
- To what extent are religious faith and secular beliefs a positive or negative force in society?
- Why do religious beliefs and ways of living seemed to divide people more than bring them together?
- To what extent is this a fair judgement? How helpful are media understandings of and reporting on issues of religion and belief?
- How can all sacred texts be true? How can people with different truth claims learn to live and flourish together in community?
- Would the world be a better place if everyone believed the same?

12. What does it mean to be a Christian in the modern world?

- Why is Jesus so important in Christianity? How do different Christians understand the significance of Jesus? How is Jesus depicted throughout the ages and across different cultures? How does Jesus influence the lives of different individuals and communities?
- How and why are the Old and New Testaments important to different Christians? How was the Bible put together and why is this important regarding different ways of interpreting the sacred texts amongst different Christians? How is the Bible used by different Christians and how does it influence their Christian life? What is the central narrative of the Bible?
- How do different Christians worship? Why are there different styles of worship and what do these show about diversity in belief and understanding amongst Christians?
- How does worship Influence their ways of living? What value is there in worship?
- Why are there so many different Christian denominations and what is their significance?
- How is Christian faith expressed through the arts?
- What important occasions and life events do Christians celebrate and what does this show about what is most important in life to them?
- What do different Christians believe about life after death and how does this influence their life in the world?
- To what extent is Christian faith more than just agreeing to credal statements?

13. What does it mean to be a Buddhist in the modern world?

- Why is Buddha so important to Buddhists? How do different Buddhists interpret the nature of the Buddha?
- What are the most important principles in Buddhism? How do these principles find expression in the lives of Buddhists around the world?
- How is the Buddhist dhamma lived out in the sangha and in the laity?

- What are the core Buddhist sacred texts and how do they shape the lives of individuals and communities?
- To what extent could Buddhism be seen as a philosophy rather than as a religion?
- To what extent does Buddhism provide a worldview suited to the modern western mind?
- How is Buddhism lived and experienced around the world?
- To what extent can Buddhism be an agent for social action and change?

14. What does it mean to be a Sikhi in the modern world?

- How did the social and historical context of northwest subcontinent influence the emergence and development of Sikhi and Sikhis today?
- How do the lives of the 10 gurus influence the living faith of Sikhi today?
- What is the Guru Granth Sahib? What are the key stories and teachings? How is it used and how does it influence modern Sikhi living?
- What do the Five Ks tell us about Sikhi living and how are they lived out and interpreted differently within Sikhi communities?
- What are the most important aspects of Sikhi living and how do Sikhis responded differently to these?
- What are the core beliefs of Sikhi and how do they influence Sikhis in Britain and beyond?
- To what extent is the importance of equality lived out in different Sikhi communities?
- Why is seva such an important aspect of Sikhi life and how does it relate to Sikhi understandings of what it means to be human?

15. What does it mean to be a humanist in the modern world?

- In what different ways do Humanists understand the world? What do they hold in common?
- How is Humanism similar to and different from religion?
- What are the roots of Humanism?
- How to Humanists find value and meaning in their lives? How is this shown in their celebrations and way of living?
- How do Humanists know what is right and wrong?
- How do Humanists decide what is true?
- What do Humanists believe about the nature of reality, what it means to be human and matters of living and dying?
- What is the Humanist vision for society?
- Are all Humanists atheists? How do they respond to religious faith?

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