

# The Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education

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STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

2023-2028



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# Introduction

XXXXXXXXX Staffordshire County Council Lead Member  
for Learning and Skills





# Foreword

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## Background Information

RE is multifaith and recognises the place of Christianity and the other principal religions in the UK. Non-religious worldviews are included.

The RE curriculum drawn up by a SACRE or used by an academy or free school, 'shall reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain' [Section 375 Education Act 1996]

Religious Education in schools **must** be taught in accordance with an Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. That syllabus is determined locally through the Agreed Syllabus Conference.

This revised Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (RE) for Staffordshire has been developed by the SACRE, supported by Religious Education professionals.

*This syllabus sets out the statutory requirements for RE in Staffordshire.*

The Staffordshire locally agreed syllabus is a statutory syllabus of RE prepared under Schedule 31 of the Education Act 1996 and adopted by the LA under that schedule.

The statutory requirements relating to Religious Education in schools are set out in the Education Act 1996 and in the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998. These are summarised in the briefing paper Religious Education in Schools (England) published by the House of Commons Library in October 2019.

The Acts referred to here are supplemented by guidance within the document Religious Education in English Schools: Non-statutory Guidance 2010, which was published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

The legislation states that all state-funded schools must teach Religious Education and that maintained schools without a religious character must follow the syllabus agreed by the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC), the body that each Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education (SACRE) is legally required to establish in order to ratify and publish the locally agreed Religious Education syllabus.

RE is a necessary part of a 'broad and balanced curriculum' and it **must** be provided for all registered pupils in state-funded schools in England, including those in the sixth form, unless withdrawn by their parents (or withdrawing themselves if they are aged 18 or over).

This requirement does not apply for children below compulsory school age (although there are many examples of good practice of RE in nursery classes).

Special schools should ensure that every pupil receives RE 'as far as is practicable'.

This revised syllabus supersedes all previous versions and is issued for implementation in all applicable Staffordshire schools from January 2023.

(See 'Ensuring Your School is Compliant' [Page 38](#))

This revised syllabus seeks to build on the previous syllabus from 2016.

Although there is no National Curriculum for RE as such, all maintained schools, including faith schools must follow the National Curriculum requirements to teach a broad and balanced

curriculum, which includes RE.

All schools therefore have a **statutory** duty to teach RE.

Academies and free schools are contractually required through the terms of their funding agreement to make provision for the teaching of RE.

*Research of the following documents has supported the writing of the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus*

- *National Curriculum Programmes of Study 2013*
- *2018 final report of the Commission on Religious Education Religion and Worldviews: The Way Forward- A National Plan for RE*
- *Ofsted May 2021 research paper on Religious Education*
- *Policy Paper on Inclusive Britain May 2022*
- *Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Handbook including Development Matters 2021*
- *The Draft Handbook Religion and Worldviews in the classroom 2022*

**When writing the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus, the advisory syllabus conference took note of the information provided in the document -*REC Draft Handbook Religion and Worldviews in the Classroom 2022*.**

**This draft document clarifies the general and legal entitlement.**

Staffordshire SACRE is confident that this revised syllabus provides firm foundations for the teaching of high quality RE including worldviews, enabling all pupils to explore religion(s) and worldviews (religious and non-religious) by exploring, engaging and reflecting on the sources of their own developing worldviews within the rich and complex heritage of humanity.

# Vision and Aims Vision Statement

The vision for Religious Education (RE) in Staffordshire's Agreed Syllabus 2023 is as follows:-

**The role of RE in schools is to help prepare and equip all pupils for life and citizenship in today's diverse and plural Britain**, through fostering in each pupil an increasing awareness of, and sensitivity within, the diversity of religious and non-religious beliefs, practices, spiritual insights and **\*\*world views** they will encounter.

By EXPLORING, ENGAGING and REFLECTING pupils will develop the knowledge, insights and skills necessary for them to be able to live authentically and responsibly as adults in today's world, acknowledging how religious and secular communities seek to uphold and develop the well-being of the human family.

## Rationale

We live in an increasingly diverse society, religiously and culturally. Religious Education plays a special role in preparing pupils to flourish in this complex world. Educating pupils to live well in a culturally and religiously plural society means that they must learn how to navigate difference and diversity.

This will often mean reflecting on views and behaviours that they have previously not encountered, and which may not correspond neatly with their own views and understandings of the world.

Religious Education therefore not only enables pupils to build up a core basis of relevant knowledge and insights and supports them as they explore the "big questions" about life and formulate and express their own views and values.

It also challenges pupils to recognise and confront negative attitudes towards diversity, both in society at large and within themselves.

## **\*\*Note on world views**

A "world view" is the framework of beliefs and values which shape the way a person experiences and responds to the world. Everyone has a world view, though this may not be acknowledged and articulated in a fully conscious form. When a group of people consciously share the same world view, they often express this in organised and tangible ways, and commit to it as part of their individual identities. Such a shared world view may be religious in character, or non-religious. Religious Education brings pupils into contact with a range of such world views, encouraging each pupil to develop and forge their own personal sense of values, identity and world view, both in the context of the pupil's cultural heritage and also more widely in relation to the diversity of world views found within society as a whole.

The Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus seeks to achieve this vision through the following specific themes



## EXPLORE




## ENGAGE



## REFLECT

## The intended outcomes of RE within the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus are that pupils should acquire, through the three themes:


### EXPLORE



*1) Acquire an increasing core of insightful knowledge concerning religions and beliefs, both in Britain and in more global terms.*

*By exploring religious beliefs, teachings, and practices* – so acquiring knowledge and understanding of religious stories, sacred texts, lifestyles, rituals, and symbolism that offer an insight into religious and secular experiences.


### ENGAGE



*2) Acquire a developing capacity to engage with ultimate questions alongside the consideration of the responses from religious and non-religious groups and worldviews and to formulate their own sense of identity and values;*

*By engaging with fundamental questions* – so appreciating the human and religious questions that are raised by life and its experiences, and through which meaning, significance and value are forged, and by expressing and evaluating their personal responses to such questions- so gaining skills to be able to relate the things studied and discussed, to their own experience.

### REFLECT



*3) A growing range of the social, spiritual, and emotional skills and dispositions appropriate to living well in a religiously plural and open society.*

*By reflecting* – on the reality of religious diversity and on the issues raised by living in a diverse world - so developing skills of analysis and discernment in relation to prejudice, discrimination, and bias, together with skills of self-awareness, moral judgement and responsible choice.

**These outcomes underpin the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus.**





Explore Engage Reflect

## The Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus

### What should be taught and when?

Each key stage should involve an in-depth study of the narrative, beliefs and practices at the heart of Christianity. Alongside Christianity, Islam should feature throughout a school's RE curriculum.

In selecting their in-depth study schools should take account of other principal/major faiths found in the United Kingdom. Schools may draw on examples from other major faiths where examples of belief and practice better illustrate the dimension being explored.

These include:-

Judaism, Sikhism (Sikhi), Hinduism and Buddhism.

In choosing their in-depth study/ focus faiths, schools should take account of the religious profile of the school and the local community as well as national and international factors.

Pupils should also be introduced to the presence of non-religious (secular) world views and the lifestyles these support as children from families where non-religious worldviews are held are represented in almost all classrooms.

These worldviews, including for example Humanism can form part of the field of study.

#### *Early Years Foundation Stage*

*In the Early Years Foundation Stage pupils should have the opportunity to develop a growing sense of awareness of self and their own community. They should encounter the diversity of faiths and world views represented in their own community and in Great Britain. Giving young children familiarity with the presence of major faiths, world views and a wide religious vocabulary raises awareness of the diverse nature of the world around them and provides a structure in which to develop their learning.*

*Schools should build upon this foundation in subsequent key stages.*

#### *Key Stage 1*

*At key stage one, schools should focus their study on Christianity and one other faith. Islam is the suggested other faith. The choice will be determined by the local context.*

#### *Key Stage 2*

*At key stage two, schools should focus on Christianity and two other faiths taking note also of non-religious world views. It is suggested that Islam is studied as one of the other faith. This choice again will be determined by the local context.*

#### *Key Stage 3 and beyond*

*At key stage three and beyond, schools should focus on Christianity and three other faiths and take note of non-religious world views. The choice again will be determined by the local context, but schools should seek to ensure that pupils have achieved a breadth of knowledge. Those pupils who undertake an examination course, their breadth of study will be in line with examination board.*

All key stages will utilise the three specific themes to support teaching and learning

The Three Specific Themes are:-



EXPLORE



ENGAGE



REFLECT

# Teaching and Learning

## Key Dimensions

The development of learners who are equipped for life and citizenship in *today's diverse and plural Britain* has to take place in a context, using dimensions and content to explore the three curriculum themes of :-

 Explore

 Engage

 Reflect

An exploration of key dimensions will give pupils the building blocks with which to construct their understanding of belief systems and world views and the context in which to develop such aspects.

### The three curriculum themes are supported by six broad dimensions:

1. Beliefs, teachings and sources
2. Practices and ways of life
3. Expressing meaning
4. Identity, diversity and belonging
5. Meaning, purpose and truth
6. Values and commitments

The programmes of study that follow identify a number of curriculum opportunities in relation to each of these broad dimensions to give structure to the planning process. Each statement should be approached in the context of the syllabus themes of :-

Explore

Engage

Reflect

Pupils are entitled to experience these curriculum opportunities and they should be the **starting point** for planning across a key stage. They do not significantly prescribe content, this is a matter for schools to decide for themselves, however they provide the basis for formulating challenging and stimulating questions which support enquiry and engage pupils in the studies through the three themes.

The curriculum opportunities in the themes and the programmes of study ([see page 17](#)) focus on religious experience and world views. To support good learning and skill development through the curriculum opportunities pupils should also, as appropriate:

- encounter people from different religious, non-religious and philosophical groups who can express a range of convictions on religion, world views and moral issues

- visit places of religious significance
- use ICT to enhance understanding
- discuss, question, and evaluate important issues in religion. world views and philosophy including ultimate questions and ethical issues
- feel confident when taking part in debates about moral issues
- prepare pupils for the fact that there will always be disagreement on matters of morality and their right of expression is balanced by a responsibility to listen to the views of others
- encourage pupils to disagree with dignity and respect the right of individuals and groups to hold different perspectives to their own
- reflect upon and carefully evaluate their own and others' beliefs and values using reasoned and balanced arguments
- use a range of forms of expression to communicate their arguments
- explore the connection between RE and other curriculum areas



Explore Engage Reflect

# Planning your Religious Education

Religious Education encompasses depth of understanding rather than breadth of areas covered. It is a complex and dynamic subject. For this reason, it must engage with important concepts rather than amass a vast list of facts.

Good planning in Religious Education will adopt approaches that aspire towards high standards, through inspirational, motivational and challenging activities. When the subject is highly valued, adequately resourced, led in a passionate way and taught with commitment and thoughtfulness, pupils will be encouraged to think deeply about the questions that confront them in studying RE, extend their learning and understanding about a variety of religion and belief perspectives, and have the opportunity to reflect on their own sense of identity with respect to religion and belief in a meaningful way.

In order to achieve these outcomes units of work should be planned to develop the three curriculum themes and to allow for regular review of pupils' progress.

This would normally, but not exclusively, mean that pupils should be guided through the curriculum themes as follows:

- Exploring the issue or dimension, encountering the context, following up questions and establishing new knowledge concerning religion, belief and world views. **(Explore)**
- Investigating the impact of beliefs and practices on lifestyles, attitudes and action and considering the ways in which beliefs, spiritual insights and ideas are expressed, engaging with fundamental questions to understand why people respond to life as they do **(Engage)**
- Reflecting on equality and diversity, and on personal responses to these aspects to develop their own standpoints and self-understanding **(Reflect)**

Teachers should exemplify the above in every unit of work. The three themes will therefore be revisited in every RE experience, giving pupils the opportunity to practise and make progress on a regular basis.

## **Inclusion SEND provision and the Agreed Syllabus**

A wide range of pupils have special educational needs, some of whom also have disabilities. A proportion of these pupils will be taught in special schools. Units of work should be planned to ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving. In many cases, such planning will mean that these pupils will be able to study fully the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education.

## **What opportunities are provided for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in RE?**

The Staffordshire SACRE vision is that every pupil can achieve and benefit from good quality RE, including all pupils with SEND. RE is a statutory part of the core curriculum for all pupils, including those with learning difficulties. Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are found in all contexts and all teachers are teachers of SEND pupils. Good quality teaching in RE will tailor the planning of the syllabus carefully to the special needs of all pupils. The law says that the Agreed Syllabus is to be taught to SEND pupils 'as far as it is practicable.' RE provision for different groups of pupils will vary but all pupils are included.

The achievements and learning of pupils with special educational needs can be measured and credited using the (older) Performance Descriptions for RE ('P' Scales), or the (newer) materials based upon the DfE's Engagement Model. These can both provide teachers with indicators of progress for pupils with SEND within RE. Teachers who work with children working within the parameters of the 'Engagement Model' will find some published guidance (e.g. Routes for Learning or Quest for Learning or EQUALS units) to support them to implement the syllabus practically and record the progress a pupil has made through the earliest stages of development. For pupils who may need modified provision, material may be selected from earlier or later key stages, where this is necessary, to enable individual pupils to progress and achieve. Such material should be presented in contexts suitable to the pupil's age. In making decisions about adjusting the content of the key stage, teachers should take into account the previous experience of the pupil as well as the necessity to communicate a specific differentiated approach to entitlement to subsequent teachers.

## Specific advice

### **Pupils with complex learning difficulties and disabilities (CLDD)**

Quality RE begins with the unique experience of each pupil. A calm and peaceful space can enable pupils to experience and enjoy a sense of spirituality as an individual. RE for CLDD pupils involves developing a sense of themselves, their emotions, senses and feelings.

### **Pupils with severe learning difficulties (SLD)**

Quality RE begins with the unique experience of each pupil. RE for SLD pupils involves developing a sense of themselves, their emotions, senses and feelings. Multi-sensory approaches can aid the enjoyment of spiritual experiences. The use of story, music and shared outdoor experiences will enhance such experiences. RE can also support the development of relationships and the understanding of the needs of other peoples' needs.

### **Pupils with moderate learning difficulties (MLD)**

RE for MLD pupils can provide an insight into the world of religions and human experience. Pupils can develop a sense of themselves, their emotions, senses and feelings. Multi-sensory approaches can aid the enjoyment of spiritual experiences. This can support pupils in making links with their own lives in their own family and local community, which should include local religious communities.

### **Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD)**

RE for EBD pupils can enable them to address deep issues of concern in the world of religions and human experience. Pupils can develop a sense of themselves, their emotions, senses and feelings, many which can be complex in nature. The school can provide a safe space to aid this development. Multi-sensory approaches can be utilised to deepen these feelings. RE can also assist the development of pupils' maturity. This can support pupils in making links with their own lives in their own family and local community, which should include local religious communities.

The 2021 Government standards for assessing pupils working towards the standards of KS1 can be found at: the DfE website. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pre-key-stage-1-standards>.

The 2021 engagement model for pupils with SEND is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-engagement-model>

 Explore

 Engage

 Reflect



Explore Engage Reflect



# Programmes of study

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- Key Stage 1
- Key Stage 2
- Key Stage 3
- Key Stage 4
- Post 16







Explore Engage Reflect

# Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Pupils should be taught an increasingly rich knowledge and understanding of religions and worldviews. They should learn to express and communicate ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews. They should gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews

Children in Nursery classes /other early years' settings are not subject to the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus, but they are required to cover the religious and spiritual aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) through the learning intentions.

These learning intentions for RE are developed from the relevant areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (DfE, 2020), supported by the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) which define the level of development children should be expected to have attained by the end of the EYFS. These are exemplified in the Prime areas.

## **Prime area: Communication and Language: RE enables pupils to:**

- Listen attentively and respond with questions comments and actions to a wide range of stories from different religions and worldviews.
- Hold conversation and make comments about the religious materials, artefacts, songs, stories and celebrations they encounter.
- Participate in discussions offering their own ideas about religion and belief using recently introduced religious vocabulary.
- Offer explanations and answers to 'why' questions about religious stories, non-fiction, rhymes, songs and poems.

## **Prime area: Personal, Social & Emotional Development. RE enables pupils to:**

- Understand their own feelings and those of others, stimulated by religious materials and ideas.
- Give focused attention to religious materials such as worship, story, festival, song, community living.
- Confidently talk about simple values, right and wrong and good or bad behaviour.
- Co-operate and take turns with others, showing sensitivity to their own and others' needs and feelings.

## **Specific areas through which the prime areas are strengthened and applied.**

### **Specific area: Literacy. RE enables pupils to:**

- Demonstrate understanding of religious stories and narratives using recently introduced vocabulary to retell stories.
- Enjoy and learn from discussion and role play about religious stories, non-fiction, rhymes, poems and songs.
- Use RE examples to write simple phrases or sentences that can be read by others.

### **Specific area: Mathematics. RE enables pupils to:**

- Recognise, create and describe some patterns, sorting and ordering objects simply.

### **Specific area: Understanding the World. RE enables pupils to:**

- Talk about the lives of people around them, understanding characters and events from stories.

- Describe their immediate environment – e.g. on a visit to a place of worship.
- 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.
- Explore the natural world around them making observations of animals and plants, environments and seasons, making space for responses of wonder, awe and questioning.

**Specific area: Expressive Arts and Design. RE enables pupils to:**

- Create work drawing from religions and beliefs with a variety of materials and tools, sharing their creations and explaining the meaning of their work.
- Adapt and recount religious stories inventively, imaginatively and expressively.
- Sing, perform and learn from well-known songs in RE imaginatively and expressively.
- Develop their imagination and expression using RE content in relation to art, music, dance, imaginative play, and role play and stories to represent their own ideas, thoughts and feelings.
- Respond in a variety of ways to what they see, hear, smell, touch and taste.

# Key Stage One (KSI)

Dimension	Curriculum Opportunities Pupils should have the opportunity to:		
<b>Beliefs teachings and sources</b>	Engage with stories and extracts from religious literature and talk about their meanings - <b>1.1a</b>	Explore stories about the lives and teachings of key religious figures - <b>1.1b</b>	Find out about ways in which sacred texts are regarded, read and handled by believers - <b>1.1c</b>
<b>Practices and ways of life</b>	Find out about how and when people worship and ask questions about why this is important to believers - <b>1.2a</b>	Explore the preparations for and find out about the celebration of festivals <b>1.2b</b>	Identify the importance for some people of belonging to a religion and recognise the difference this makes to their lives - <b>1.2c</b>
<b>Expressing meaning</b>	Explore as appropriate the special nature of artefacts used in worship - <b>1.3a</b>	Identify symbolic actions, gestures and rituals and talk about how they are used as part of worship and ceremonies - <b>1.3b</b>	Engage with religious beliefs and ideas expressed through story, symbol and other visual forms of expression - <b>1.3c</b>
<b>Identity diversity and belonging</b>	Reflect and respond to stories about belonging and relating to religious communities and non-religious ways of life- <b>1.4a</b>	Identify and ask questions about customs associated with particular religious and non-religious ways of life - <b>1.4b</b>	Find out about ceremonies in which special moments in the life cycle are marked - <b>1.4c</b>
<b>Meaning purpose and truth</b>	Ask and respond to questions about things that are interesting or puzzling in the world - <b>1.5a</b>	Listen to and ask questions about stories of individuals and their relationship with God - <b>1.5b</b>	Explore a range of stories and extracts from sacred writings and talk about meaning they have for believers - <b>1.5c</b>
<b>Values and commitments</b>	Reflect and respond to stories highlighting the morals and values in practice - <b>1.6a</b>	Reflect on examples of care and concern shown by believers in religious communities and non-religious ways of life and explore reasons for these actions - <b>1.6b</b>	Explore stories from religious traditions and find out about attitudes to the natural world - <b>1.6c</b>

# Key Stage Two (KS2)

Dimension	Curriculum Opportunities Pupils should have the opportunity to:			
<b>Beliefs teachings and sources</b>	Explore the origins of sacred writings and consider their importance for believers today - <b>2.1a</b>	Explore a variety of forms of literature found in sacred books and investigate a range of religious teachings - <b>2.1b</b>	Explore the life of key religious figures and make links with teachings and practices of special significance to followers - <b>2.1c</b>	Explore the meaning of a wide range of stories about the beginnings of the world and reflect upon their importance for believers - <b>2.1d</b>
<b>Practices and ways of life</b>	Compare and contrast the practice of religion in the home in different religious communities - <b>2.2a</b>	Identify the main features and patterns of an act of worship and talk about the importance of worship for believers - <b>2.2b</b>	Investigate some features of key religious festivals and celebrations and identify similarities and differences - <b>2.2c</b>	Investigate the life of a person who has been inspired by their faith and make links between belief and action - <b>2.2d</b>
<b>Expressing meaning</b>	Explore the symbolic use of a wide range of objects, sounds, visual images, actions and gestures and make suggestions as to the intended meaning they might have for believers - <b>2.3a</b>	Explore the meaning of stories drawn from religious sources and reflect on the significance of key words, phrases or expressions - <b>2.3b</b>	Compare and contrast the use of symbols, actions and gestures used in worship by different communities - <b>2.3c</b>	Identify some of the ways in which religions name and describe attributes of God and make links with belief and practice - <b>2.3d</b>
<b>Identity diversity and belonging</b>	Explore the diversity of a range of religious traditions and world views and identify and reflect on similarities and differences - <b>2.4a</b>	Find out about the activities of a local religious community and make links with key religious teachings - <b>2.4b</b>	Research some key events in the development of a religious tradition and explain the impact on believers today - <b>2.4c</b>	Investigate the importance for believers of ceremonies in which special moments in the life cycle are marked - <b>2.4d</b>
<b>Meaning purpose and truth</b>	Raise questions about issues which cause people to wonder and investigate some answers to be found in religious writings and teachings - <b>2.5a</b>	Investigate and reflect on a range of religious and world view responses to suffering, hardship and death - <b>2.5b</b>	Investigate stories about God's relationship with people and suggest how, for some people, this helps them to make sense of life - <b>2.5c</b>	Make links between beliefs and action and reflect on how this might have local, national and international impact - <b>2.5d</b>
<b>Values and commitments</b>	Explore rules for living found in sacred writings and teachings and ask questions about their impact on the lives of believers - <b>2.6a</b>	Investigate ceremonies associated with joining or belonging to a faith community and talk about the meaning of commitment - <b>2.6b</b>	Engage with a variety of people about their beliefs and values and ask questions about the way commitment affects their lives - <b>2.6c</b>	Explore religious stories and teachings about the environment and identify and reflect on their impact on behaviour - <b>2.6d</b>

# Key Stage Three (KS3)

Dimension	Curriculum Opportunities Pupils should have the opportunity to:		
<b>Beliefs teachings and sources</b>	Explore different possible interpretations for a range of sacred writings and religious teachings and reflect on their impact on individuals and communities - <b>3.1a</b>	Evaluate the contribution made to communities and societies by different religious leaders - <b>3.1b</b>	Apply the teachings of key religious figures to contemporary moral and ethical issues - <b>3.1c</b>
<b>Practices and ways of life</b>	Analyse and reflect on the significance of shared activities for individuals both believers and non-believers, religious communities and those of no faith.- <b>3.2a</b>	Explore celebrations and commemorations which can both unite and divide and reflect on the reasons for this - <b>3.2b</b>	Evaluate the impact of beliefs on behaviour and explore the consequences for individuals and communities- <b>3.2c</b>
<b>Expressing meaning</b>	Compare and contrast the use of symbolism in worship and analyse its effectiveness for believers - <b>3.3a</b>	Investigate the symbolism of celebration and commemoration and evaluate its effectiveness in expressing what is important to religious communities - <b>3.3b</b>	Identify a range of key sources for religious communities and make connections between interpretation and action - <b>3.3c</b>
<b>Identity diversity and belonging</b>	Explore why people belong or do not belong to religions and analyse the impact this has on individuals and communities - <b>3.4a</b>	Compare and contrast key religious practices and reflect on why there is diversity within and between faiths - <b>3.4b</b>	Explore the impact of diversity, both religious and secular on communities and how some apply religious teaching to issues of tolerance and harmony - <b>3.4c</b>
<b>Meaning purpose and truth</b>	Demonstrate how believers use religious sources to provide answers when engaging with questions of meaning, purpose and truth - <b>3.5a</b>	Analyse and compare the evidence and arguments used when engaging with questions about the nature and existence of God - <b>3.5b</b>	Evaluate the relationship between science and religion - <b>3.5c</b>
<b>Values and commitments</b>	Investigate the responsibility and explain the challenge of carrying on a religious tradition - <b>3.6a</b>	Make clear connections between religious beliefs, teachings and actions - <b>3.6b</b>	Apply a range of beliefs and values to current issues and questions and analyse the impact on choices and behaviour - <b>3.6c</b>

# Key Stage Four (KS4)

At key stage 4, students are expected to research beliefs, practices, issues and ideas associated with religions and worldviews and be able to demonstrate an understanding of how these impact on the lives of individuals, groups, communities and within wider society. They should also be attentive to the place of religions and belief within public life in our country and across the world. These insights will be derived from engagement with religion and belief through theological, ethical, philosophical, and sociological perspectives.

In keeping with the three themes and the underlying principles of the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus all key stage 4 pupils **must** have the opportunity to study Christianity and to draw examples from at least three other faiths or secular world view.

The decision to enter pupils for an examination at the end of the course is at the schools' discretion.

At key stage 4 pupils may fulfil their entitlement by following as a basis an accredited specification (from a recognised examination board) in Religious Studies. Schools should provide reasonable time for pupils to complete this and if appropriate, to attain an external qualification.

This may be Full Course, or Entry Level Religious Studies.

Schools wishing to base this provision on any other specification, for example Humanities or Citizenship, must take advice from SACRE.

## **Please note**

Where schools do not provide an accredited course they **must make** alternative provision to teach RE

# Post 16 Key Stage Five (KS5)

A programme of study is included here for students who are not pursuing an examination course in religious education/studies. Schools are encouraged to use a variety of approaches to ensuring the statutory requirements are met at key stage 5. RE **must be taught** at key stage 5.

Dimension	Curriculum Opportunities Pupils should have the opportunity to:	
<b>Beliefs teachings and sources</b>	Critically evaluate the influence and authority of sacred literature for believers today - <b>5.1a</b>	Explain the impact of belief on the achievements of significant religious figures and evaluate their influence on historical and contemporary issues - <b>5.1b</b>
<b>Practices and ways of life</b>	Explore and reflect on the way in which belief and practice support and sustain individuals and communities using contemporary examples - <b>5.2a</b>	Present evidence for differing interpretations of religious sources and analyse and reflect the impact on individual conscience and social change - <b>5.2b</b>
<b>Expressing meaning</b>	Explore and interpret the significance and function of a variety of forms of religious, spiritual, secular and moral expression - <b>5.3a</b>	Present a detailed analysis of key religious and non-religious sources and evaluate a range of interpretations - <b>5.3b</b>
<b>Identity diversity and belonging</b>	Reflect critically on the advantages and disadvantages of inheriting a religious tradition and reflect on the changing impact of religion and beliefs on community and society over time - <b>5.4a</b>	Reflect critically on the variety of practice within and between faith groups and reflect on issues which unite and divide religious traditions - <b>5.4b</b>
<b>Meaning purpose and truth</b>	Engage with and analyse responses to philosophical and paradoxical questions from a range of perspectives - <b>5.5a</b>	Investigate and interpret a variety of religious, non-religious and spiritual experience and reflect on differing responses and impact - <b>5.5b</b>
<b>Values and commitments</b>	Explore ways in which communities help their members respond positively to life's dilemmas - <b>5.6a</b>	Raise questions about contemporary personal, moral and social issues and analyse the variety of religious and non-religious responses - <b>5.6b</b>

# A Framework for Assessment

## Assessing achievement in Religious Education (RE)

Pupils have an entitlement to RE throughout their school life. This entitlement should include the opportunities, experiences and challenges which engage young people in the learning process.

As part of that learning process, pupils should have clear goals to aim for. They should also be supported on their learning journey by a **framework** which indicates progress.

Here, the framework takes the form of age-related expectations.

The framework supports and promotes the development of the three syllabus themes

The framework provides a statement of age-related expectations for each year group. It should be used by teachers as a tool to determine the extent to which pupils have met the expectations.

Pupils are assessed as:

- **Working at greater depth within the expected standard (GDS):** pupils who are exceeding the expectations for their age group
- **Working at the expected standard (EXS):** pupils who are meeting the expectations for their age group in full
- **Working towards the expected standard (WTS):** pupils who have yet to meet the expectations for their age group

Teachers will be expected to comply with current legislation with regard to the reporting of progress and attainment in religious education.

## SEND assessment

The achievements and learning of pupils with special educational needs can be measured and credited using the (older) Performance Descriptions for RE ('P' Scales), or the (newer) materials based upon the DfE's Engagement Model. These can both provide teachers with indicators of progress for pupils with SEND within RE. Teachers who work with children working within the parameters of the 'Engagement Model' will find some published guidance (e.g. Routes for Learning or Quest for Learning or EQUALS units) to support them to implement the syllabus practically and record the progress a pupil has made through the earliest stages of development.



# The Religious Education Framework

## Age related expectations for RE

The age-related expectations can be used as a whole to provide an overview of reasonable expectations of achievement across the three themes of religious education for each year group.

### Assessment

GDS

EXS

WTS

For each statement a pupil can be assessed as

working at greater depth within the expected standard (GDS),

working at the expected standard (EXS) or

working towards the expected standard (WTS):

### By the end of Reception/EYFS

Explore



Pupils talk about past and present events in their own lives and in the lives of family members. They talk about similarities and differences in relation to themselves, places, objects, materials and living things including faith buildings e.g. the church.

Engage



Pupils can talk about the features of their own immediate environment and how environments might vary from one another and what makes them special and unique.

Reflect



Pupils can talk about how other children do not always enjoy the same things and are sensitive to this. They can talk about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among families, communities, and traditions. They can show how important it is to be part of a community

### By the end of Year 1

Explore



Pupils use words and phrases to recognise and name features of religious life and practice valued by believers. They can recall religious stories and recognise symbols and other verbal and visual forms of religious expression which have meaning for believers.

Engage



Pupils can talk about the experiences of the world around them, stating what is of value and concern to themselves and others. They use stories to identify ways in which people are special and unique.

Reflect



Pupils can demonstrate awareness that there are many religious traditions/faith communities and that some people do not follow a recognised faith or believe system or identify as being religious.

## By the end of Year 2

### Explore



Pupils use words and phrases to identify some features of religious life and practices valued by believers. Pupils retell religious stories and suggest meanings for religious actions and symbols. They identify how religion is expressed in different ways.

### Engage



Pupils can recognise that some questions cause people to wonder and are difficult to answer. They are able to share ideas about right and wrong.

### Reflect



Pupils are able to name more than one religious tradition or faith community and can talk about some of the distinctive features of each religious tradition/faith community. They know that some people do not identify as being religious.

## By the end of Year 3

### Explore



Pupils use a developing vocabulary to describe some key features of religions, recognising similarities and differences. They make links between beliefs, practices and sources, including religious stories and sacred texts. They begin to identify the impact religion has on believers' lives. They describe some forms of religious expression.

### Engage



Pupils ask important questions about values, commitments, and beliefs, making links between their own and others' responses, attitudes and behaviour.

### Reflect



Pupils can identify and distinguish between the faiths and world views being explored and can express some awareness of their identity within or outside these faiths. They understand the importance and reality of existing in a plural context. They know that some people do not identify as being religious.

## By the end of Year 4

### Explore



Pupils use a developing vocabulary to describe and show understanding of sources, practices, beliefs, ideas, and experiences. They make links between them and describe some similarities and differences both within and between religions. They describe the impact of religion on people's lives. They explore and explain meanings for a range of forms of religious expression.

### Engage



Pupils raise, and suggest answers to, fundamental questions of identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values, and commitments, recognising the implications and consequences of making moral choices.

### Reflect



They apply their ideas about identity and commitment in a diverse world to their own and other people's lives. They describe what inspires and influences themselves and others, especially their commitments, values, and choices. They can recognise in themselves and others some reactions to living alongside others who have a different faith or stance. They can explain why some people do not identify as being religious.

## By the end of Year 5

### Explore



Pupils use an increasingly wide vocabulary to explain the impact of religious beliefs and a non-religious life stance on individuals and communities. They show a developing insight into why people belong to religions. They demonstrate that similarities and differences illustrate distinctive beliefs within and between religions and suggest possible reasons for this. They explain how religious sources are used to provide answers to ethical issues. They

### Engage



Pupils ask, and suggest answers to, fundamental questions of identity, belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, values and commitments, relating them to their own and others' lives and making clear connections between personal viewpoints and action.

### Reflect



Pupils explain what inspires and influences them, expressing their own and others' views on the opportunities and challenges of commitment in a diverse world. They identify the consequences for themselves and for others of holding particular beliefs and values.

## By the end of Year 6

### Explore



Pupils use an increasingly rich vocabulary to give informed accounts of religions and beliefs. They interpret sources and arguments, explaining the reasons that are used in different ways by different traditions to provide answers for ethical issues. They interpret the significance of different forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression. They interpret sources and arguments regarding world views/issues.

### Engage



Pupils use reasoning and examples to explore the relationship between beliefs, teachings and world issues. They express insights into their own and others' views on fundamental questions of identity and belonging, meaning purpose and perceived truth.

### Reflect



Focussing on values and commitments pupils consider their own response to the opportunities and challenges of living in a diverse world whilst taking into account the views and experiences of others. They are able to talk about examples of religious cooperation and why this is sometimes difficult.

## By the end of Key Stage 3

### Explore



Pupils use a comprehensive vocabulary to show a coherent understanding of a range of religions and beliefs by analysing issues in a faith context. They account for the influence of history and culture on aspects of religious life and practice. They use some of the principal methods by which religion, spirituality and ethics are studied, including the use of a variety of sources, evidence, and forms of expression.

### Engage



Pupils identify, and articulate critical responses to, fundamental questions of meaning, purpose and truth and ethical issues. They can express a clear sense of their own identity.

## Reflect



Pupils evaluate the significance of religious and world views for understanding questions of human relationships, belonging, identity, society, values, and commitments appropriate to living well in a diverse world. They identify interfaith opportunities and successes as well as instances of religious prejudice and of discrimination on religious grounds using evidence and examples and in the context of their own experience. They are able to articulate awareness of negative attitudes within themselves and others.

## By the end of Key Stage 4

### Explore



Pupils use sophisticated vocabulary to analyse a range of religions and beliefs. They contextualise expressions of religion with reference to historical, cultural, social, and philosophical ideas. They critically evaluate the impact of religions and beliefs on differing communities and societies. They analyse differing interpretations of religious, spiritual, and moral sources, using some of the principal methods by which religion, spirituality and ethics are studied.

### Engage



Pupils coherently analyse a wide range of viewpoints on fundamental questions of identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values, and commitments. They can give an account of and justification for their personal standpoints

### Reflect



Pupils synthesise a range of evidence, arguments, reflections, and examples on the challenges raised by living in a diverse world. They can discuss coherently strategies for living well in a religiously plural and open society, developing skills for countering prejudice, discrimination, and bias, fully justifying their own views and ideas and providing a detailed insight of the perspectives of others.

## By the end of Post 16

### Explore



Pupils use a complex and sophisticated vocabulary to provide a consistent and detailed analysis of religions and beliefs. They clearly recognise the extent to which the impact of religion and beliefs on different communities and societies has changed over time. They provide a detailed analysis of how religious, spiritual and moral sources are interpreted in different ways, evaluating the principal methods by which religion and spirituality and ethics are studied. They synthesise effectively their accounts of the varied forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression.

### Engage



Pupils analyse in depth a wide range of perspectives on questions of identity and belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, and values and commitments relating this both to themselves and others.

### Reflect



Pupils evaluate in depth the significance of religious diversity in a pluralistic society. They give independent, well informed, and highly reasoned insights into their own and others' perspectives on religious and spiritual issues raised by living in a diverse world, providing well-substantiated and balanced conclusions



# Religious Education (RE) and British Values

The Government first set out its definition of British values in 2011 as part of its Prevent Strategy, which was introduced as part of a series of initiatives designed to combat violent extremism.

Since 2014, Ofsted has been charged with the responsibility of scrutinising the place of British values and making a judgement about the effectiveness of schools in promoting them as part of the inspection process.

British values include the following strands:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect
- Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Effective teaching and learning in RE will provide a range of opportunities for pupils to engage with and think about British values. This is because the subject addresses universal human values and considers the place of moral and ethical concerns within religions and worldviews, which underline the importance of human dignity, fairness, trust, respect, justice and freedom.

RE will promote the different strands of the British values agenda. It is important to add that RE is only one of many subjects within the school curriculum that will contribute to the promotion of British values. Every school has an overarching responsibility to ensure that each of the statutory values are understood and upheld by the pupils in their care and this requirement will be addressed through a variety of strategies and subject policies.

## **Democracy**

In the study of RE, it is important that a range of views, perspectives and attitudes can be heard and that all pupils have the opportunity to contribute to debates and discussions.

Teachers who ensure that this objective is fulfilled will be modelling democratic behaviour and, in so doing, reinforcing this particular British value.

## **The rule of law**

RE will involve pupils in learning about and understanding the principles behind a range of codes for human living, which are associated with different faith and belief positions. They will be able to differentiate between state and religious laws and grasp the importance of fairness, justice, equality and order.

## **Individual liberty**

Through their study of a range of religions and non-religious worldviews, pupils will examine important questions relating to human identity as this is shaped by both socio-cultural settings and personal decisions. The value of individual liberty will be highlighted by considering issues such as human freedom, autonomy and desire, along with the place of both faith and reason.

## **Mutual respect**

A vital outcome of pupils' study of RE should be a sense of respect for those who hold a wide range of faith and belief positions. This stance will not preclude the possibility of disagreement. However, pupils will be encouraged to disagree with dignity and respect the right of individuals and groups to hold different perspectives to their own.

## **Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs**

The expression of intolerant attitudes has no place in the RE classroom, although attitudes and behaviours that cause harm to others will be considered.

Teachers should aspire to go beyond promoting tolerance of different religions and worldviews by underlining the need to celebrate diversity and encouraging attitudes of respect and trust to develop.

# The Inspection of Religious Education (RE)

All state-funded primary and secondary schools will be subject to Section 5 inspections, which will be carried out by Ofsted inspectors.

Ofsted will also inspect schools of religious character.

They may inspect Religious Education but will not inspect collective worship in these schools.

Schools with a religious character will be subject to an additional inspection process. In schools within this category, denominational education and collective worship are inspected by a body appointed by the maintained school's governing board under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 or as provided in the academy's funding agreement. The inspection framework or body responsible for different kinds of schools with religious character are as follows:

- Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist schools (SIAMS) for Church of England and Methodist schools.
- Diocesan or Archdiocesan inspections for Catholic schools.
- The Association of Muslim Schools (AMS) for Islamic schools.
- Pikuach – the education arm of the Board of Deputies of British Jews – for Jewish schools.
- The Hindu Education Authority for Hindu schools.
- The Network of Sikh Organisations for Sikh schools.

Further information about the inspection arrangements for schools with a religious character is provided within the briefing paper, Faith Schools in England: FAQs, published by the House of Commons Library in June 2018.

## The Ofsted Framework

Ofsted published a new Education Inspection Framework (EIF) and associated School Inspection Handbooks, which were implemented in school inspections from September 2019 onwards.

These documents signalled a significant shift in the approach in the inspection of schools. This now involves a greater focus on the wider curriculum subjects, including Religious Education.

Based on data collected by the National Association for Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) in Autumn 2019, the impact of the new inspection framework is already being experienced by schools, with the inspectors taking an increasing interest in what Ofsted are calling 'the quality of education' in Religious Education.

This involves assessment of the leadership, curriculum, planning, teaching, learning, assessment and resourcing of Religious Education. In addition to inspecting the individual curriculum subjects, Ofsted will also consider, and make a judgement about, the extent to which each school promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of its pupils. Under the new Education Inspection Framework, key judgements will be made about four aspects of the work of each school:

- Quality of education
- Behaviour and attitudes
- Personal development
- Leadership and management

## Implementation of the new Ofsted EIF will involve three interlinked elements:

### • Top-level view:

Inspectors and leaders start with a top-level view of the school's curriculum, exploring what is on offer, to whom and when, leaders' understanding of curriculum intent and sequencing, and why these choices were made.

### • Deep dive:

A 'deep dive', which involves gathering evidence on the curriculum intent, implementation and impact over a sample of subjects, topics or aspects. This is done in collaboration with leaders, teachers and pupils. The intent of the deep dive is to seek to interrogate and establish a coherent evidence base on quality of education. A 'deep dive' will involve conversations with senior leaders and subject coordinators, lesson visits, scrutiny of pupils' work, discussion with teachers and listening to pupils.

### • Bringing it together:

Inspectors will bring the evidence together to widen coverage and to test whether any issues identified during the deep dives are systemic. This will usually lead to school leaders bringing forward further evidence and inspectors gathering additional evidence. The 'Quality of education' judgement is at the heart of the inspection process and will be based upon the examination of and judgement about the curriculum, teaching, assessment and standards.

This will involve close attention being given to the so-called 'three *Is*': **Intent, Implementation and Impact**.

In turn, these three aspects of the education concern

what is conceived (the vision),

what is taught (the provision) and

what is experienced (the outcome)

In preparation for a school inspection, RE coordinators/subject leads, along with class teachers who are delivering the subject, will need to think carefully about each of these elements.

## Intent

This will focus on the vision for RE; the clarity of understanding of the subject's role, purpose and value; how these objectives are expressed within the school's RE policy; the planning of the subject to demonstrate coherence, progression, balance and structure, based on the syllabus for Religious Education that has been adopted in each school; and the extent to which the RE curriculum reflects the school's local cultural, religious and wider belief context.

## Implementation

This will involve the inspectors making judgements about the subject knowledge of teachers responsible for teaching the subject; the availability and quality of training and other professional development opportunities in Religious Education; the ability of teachers to develop the understanding amongst pupils of key concepts and their engagement in discussion and reflection; the extent to which pupils' work is checked and any misunderstandings are addressed; and the capacity of pupils to embed religious concepts in their long term memories so that they can be both spoken about and applied in a fluent and constructive way.

## Impact

This part of the inspection process will involve inspectors in following through the vision, plans and teaching of the subject by making judgements about: the depth of knowledge and understanding of pupils in RE; the progress that pupils are making in the subject; and the ability of pupils to show that they know more, remember more and can do more as a result of the teaching they have received.

The 'deep dive' method may be used to focus on this element of the inspection process. The table overleaf includes a number of questions that RE coordinators may find helpful as they prepare for the inspection of the subject in the context of each of these 'three *Is*'

## INTENT

- What is the school's vision for Religious Education?
- What value is attached to the subject?
- Which religious traditions are to be investigated?
- Is the subject adequately resourced?
- Are visits and visitors included with the curriculum plan for Religious Education?
- Has the curriculum been planned in order to promote progression?
- Has the learning been appropriately differentiated so that all pupils, including those with SEND, can fulfil their potential and demonstrate progress?
- Is there an expectation that children will develop their knowledge, understanding, skills, awareness, values and vocabulary in Religious Education as they study it?
- Has attention been given to the embedding of ideas, concepts and principles relating to Religious Education within children's long-term memories?
- Has assessment for and of learning been carefully planned?



## IMPLEMENTATION

- Are coherent plans available for those responsible for teaching the subject?
- Have clear learning objectives, in the form of key questions, been set out for the units and lessons in the plans for Religious Education?
- Do the teachers have an expert knowledge of Religious Education?
- Do the lessons incorporate a variety of teaching and learning strategies?
- Is the teaching of Religious Education creative, enthusiastic and inspiring?
- Are resources, such as religious artefacts and art, used in the lessons?
- Is assessment for and of learning embedded within lesson delivery?
- Do pupils learn from as well as about religion and belief?
- Are pupils motivated, positive and committed to the subject?
- Are the units, lessons and lesson activities coherent and logically ordered?
- Is the teaching of Religious Education open, objective and balanced?
- Does Religious Education promote respect for all religions and beliefs?

## IMPACT

- Are most pupils achieving, or exceeding, their age-appropriate expectation for RE as referenced in the assessment section in this AS?
- Are pupils who are facing barriers to learning, including pupils with SEND, able to access learning and succeed in RE?
- Is there clear evidence that pupils are progressing as they move through the year groups in their knowledge and understanding of, and their reflection on, religious, ethical, philosophical and spiritual matters?
- Have children developed mastery of certain central concepts and ideas in Religious Education as an outcome of their study of the subject?
- Are pupils able to articulate a clear sense of the value and purpose of Religious Education?
- As an outcome of their learning in RE, are pupils able to make sense of their own and others' religious and non-religious beliefs?
- Are pupils being effectively prepared to play a constructive role within a religiously and culturally diverse society?

## How the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus supports Ofsted inspections- the Expectations, Progression and Achievement in Religious Education

The Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF) places greater emphasis than ever on the role of subjects in setting high standards of learning.

This syllabus is carefully designed to support teachers in the following inspection priorities for

### **Intent**

### **Implementation and**

### **Impact.**

Inspectors look for an RE curriculum which has similar ambitions to the National Curriculum subject orders.

This syllabus offers such a curriculum, and requires schools to provide time, staff leadership and investment in training to ensure that pupil entitlements to quality RE are met.

### **Intent -setting the intentions for RE**

We support schools to clearly establish their own intentions for learning through our vision, aims and themes.

We also advise on which religions are to be studied in each key stage.

### **Implementation**

This syllabus supports the implementation of a high quality and ambitious RE curriculum. It is intended to be intellectually challenging and personally enriching for all learners.

The specific themes of **Explore Engage and Reflect** support the implementation of this syllabus.

These three curriculum themes are supported by six broad dimensions woven into Programmes of Study:

1. Beliefs, teachings and sources
2. Practices and ways of life
3. Expressing meaning
4. Identity, diversity and belonging
5. Meaning, purpose and truth
6. Values and commitments

The Programmes of Study are woven into every unit of work to enable lesson by lesson and unit by unit progress towards the age-related outcomes for pupils in each year group including the end of key stage 3 and 4 and post 16 outcomes which includes GCSE expectations.

### **The impact of the curriculum on pupils**

We have specified the main progression points in the assessment section of this syllabus.

These assessment outcomes are woven into every unit of work.

The age-related expectations can be used as a whole to provide an overview of the reasonable expectation of achievement across the three themes for each year group.

For each statement a pupil can be assessed as:-

- working at greater depth within the expected standard (GDS)
- working at the expected standard (EXS)
- or working towards the expected standard (WTS):

# Legal Framework/Requirements

The position of religious education in the school curriculum has been consolidated through a succession of primary legislation, from the Education Act of 1944 through to the Education Act of 1996 and the School Standards and Framework Act of 1998

## Religious Education (RE) is for all pupils

- There is a statutory requirement and a legal pupil entitlement for schools to provide a basic and broad and balanced curriculum.
- This consists of the national curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for Religious Education (RE)
- RE is part of the basic and broad and balanced curriculum. It **must** be provided for all registered pupils in state-funded schools in England, including those in the sixth form.
- Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the RE curriculum. [Section 386 Education Act 1996] (or students can withdraw themselves if they are aged 18 or over)
- It is the duty of school leaders (this includes trustees and governors) to ensure that this statutory requirement is met. [The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 Schedule 19]
- Special schools should ensure that every pupil receives RE 'as far as is practicable'.

## RE is locally determined, not nationally, but requirements vary for different types of schools

- A locally agreed syllabus is a statutory syllabus for RE recommended by an Agreed Syllabus Conference for adoption by a local authority.
- The Agreed Syllabus **must** reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. [Section 375 Education Act 1996]. The exploration of non-religious worldviews should also be included.
- All Local Authorities (LAs) are required to establish a Standing Advisory Council on RE (SACRE). This Council has the duty of advising the LA on all aspects of RE.
- Local Authority Maintained/ Community / Voluntary Controlled schools without a religious character **must** follow the locally agreed syllabus.
- Foundation Schools and Voluntary Controlled schools with a religious character **must** follow the locally agreed syllabus.
- In Academies and Free schools, RE should be provided as part of a broad and balanced curriculum and in line with requirements for Agreed Syllabuses. The requirements for the type of RE that an academy provides, will be set out in their funding agreement. For schools without a faith designation, this will usually mirror the requirements for local authority - maintained schools without a religious character.
- Academies may use the locally agreed syllabus, or a different locally agreed syllabus (with the permission of the SACRE concerned) or devise their own curriculum. OFSTED expects Academies to provide an RE curriculum 'of similar ambition' to the subject orders of the National Curriculum. This Staffordshire agreed syllabus has been written to support academies in our local area to meet the requirements of their funding agreement and is warmly commended to them. Academies which were formerly Voluntary Aided schools should follow the guidance for Voluntary Aided schools.
- Voluntary-aided schools with a religious character should provide RE in accordance with the trust deed or religious designation of the school unless parents request the locally agreed syllabus. Church of England schools (including church academies and church free schools) should provide a wide range of opportunities for learners to understand and to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths and worldviews studied. This can be achieved by using the agreed syllabus.

**Please note-**

The above information also applies to the teaching of RE in schools with Sixth Forms.

The effectiveness of denominational education in schools with a religious character such as Roman Catholic, Church of England and Methodist schools, is evaluated during the Statutory Section 48 Inspection.

Despite education policy changes, the legal requirement for RE for **all** registered pupils remains unchanged. RE is an entitlement for all pupils on the roll of every school, unless they have been withdrawn by their parents from RE.



**In Staffordshire, schools that are required to follow the Agreed Syllabus are deemed to be meeting their statutory duties when:**

- Religious Education (RE) is planned and taught in such a way as to ensure pupils’ entitlement to the learning experiences set out in the programme of learning for each key stage
- The age-related expectations are used to plan for learning, assessment and progression.
- Reasonable time is made available for the study of RE. The guidelines can be found below:
- Pupils at Key Stage 4 study Christianity and at least three other faiths
- At all other key stages schools focus on the teaching of Christianity whilst making pupils aware of the existence and, where possible, the broad perspectives and features of other faiths and non-religious world views as appropriate.

In addition, although not part of the legal requirement, the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) strongly recommends that the guidelines outlined here are followed.

- The table below is used as a guideline for time allocation for RE

Reception/Key Stage 1	36 hours per year
Key Stage 2	45 hours per year
Key Stage 3	45 hours per year
Key Stage 4	40 hours per year
Post 16	Allocation of time for RE for all should be clearly identifiable. Sufficient time to ensure the legal entitlement is met ensuring at least four of the concepts in the programme of study are studied.

- sufficient evidence of pupils’ achievement is recorded to allow for an overall ‘best fit’ standard of achievement to be assigned to each pupil at the end of each year
- on transfer from key stage to key stage or school to school, teachers should provide the following information:

A long-term plan identifying how the programme of study has been delivered during the most recent keystage and a best fit standard of achievement for each pupil.

# Ensuring your setting is compliant

## Legal requirements

Religious Education (RE) should be provided as part of the basic curriculum for all registered pupils attending a maintained school. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of RE and are not obliged to state their reasons for withdrawal. The 1998 School Standards and Framework Act (the 1998 Act) defined new categories of maintained schools; the rules about the provision of RE differ in some categories, as follows:

- Community/Maintained Schools are controlled by the local authority (LA). RE **must** be taught according to the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus of the LA.
- Foundation Schools. RE is taught according to the requirements of the local Agreed Syllabus, unless the schools are of a religious character, in which case their RE is characterised by their Trust Deed.
- Voluntary Aided (VA) schools are those schools originally founded by voluntary bodies but aided from public funds. RE should be taught according to their Trust Deed.
- Voluntary Controlled (VC) schools were originally founded by voluntary bodies but are now controlled and entirely funded and maintained/controlled by the LA. RE must be taught according to the requirements of the local Agreed Syllabus, but parents may request that RE should be provided in accordance with the Trust Deed.
- Special Schools should provide RE for all their pupils as far as practicable, according to the status of the school.
- Schools with Sixth Forms must provide RE for all pupils in the sixth form in accordance with the local Agreed Syllabus.
- Academies are independent schools. Pupils' entitlement to RE should be provided as part of a broad and balanced curriculum in accordance with the requirements for Agreed Syllabuses.
- Free Schools are independent schools; however, as a condition of their grant, they must make provision for pupils' entitlement to RE in accordance with the requirements for Agreed Syllabuses.
- Sixth Form Colleges and Further Education Colleges must provide RE for all students who wish to receive it.

Staffordshire SACRE recognises the independence of Academies and Free Schools.

However, it commends this Agreed Syllabus to them as a constructive and collaborative way to meet their legal requirements in RE.

# Acknowledgements

## The Working Group

Rev Preb Michael Metcalf, SACRE Chair  
Sam Kirwan, St Dominics Brewood  
Mary Gale, Associate Consultant to Staffordshire SACRE and CEO to MGC consultancy  
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### Committee D: Local Authority

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Paul Northcott  
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### Co-opted Members of Staffordshire SACRE

Appendix 1  
Planning examples

Appendix 2  
Assessment examples

Appendix 3  
Resources to support

Appendix 4  
Useful websites





