



Religious Education Progression

Rochdale

Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education
2025-2030



Principal aim

The principal aim of RE is to engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldviews address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own.

Respecting every child

Include religious and non-religious families. Say "some Christians" or "many Muslims" where practices vary. Children may share experiences but are never expected to represent a whole faith or disclose personal beliefs. Distinguish learning about a celebration from taking part in worship. Use accurate, respectful language and explain that people within a community may live and believe differently.

Adapt resources and responses for inclusion including SEND: photographs, objects, gesture, visual vocabulary, communication aids, oral responses, drawing and role play. Use children's individual curriculum and communication goals where appropriate in Rainbow and Rainforest provision, while supporting access to shared RE experiences.

Assessment progression

Phase	Progression emphasis	Assessment evidence
EYFS	Notice, talk and respond	Talks about special stories, people, places and celebrations; notices similarities and differences; uses pictures, role play and talk to express ideas.
KS1	Recall, name, retell and respond	Recalls beliefs and practices; retells religious and moral stories; recognises symbols and sacred texts; asks/responds to questions about belonging, right and wrong.
Lower KS2	Describe, connect and compare	Describes beliefs, worship and ways of living; makes links between stories, texts and practices; compares religions/worldviews respectfully.
Upper KS2	Explain, reason and evaluate	Explains meanings and significance; uses evidence from sources of wisdom; discusses challenging questions and presents reasoned personal responses.

EYFS learning sequence

The sequence now matches the supplied Sky, Ocean and Reception maps. Nursery offers foundations for the Reception enquiries rather than teaching the full Reception units early. Festivals are revisited when they occur; their dates may move between terms. Christmas is explored in Autumn 2 and Easter in Spring. Other celebrations reflect the cohort and wider community.

Half term	Sky Nursery	Ocean Nursery	Reception
Autumn 1	Special stories and people	Which stories and people are special?	F1 Which stories are special and why?
Autumn 2	Family special times and Christmas	How and why do people celebrate?	F2 Which people are special and why?
Spring 1	Special places and caring	What places are special and why?	F3 Which places are special and why?
Spring 2	Spring celebrations and special people	What times are special and why?	F4 Which times are special and why?
Summer 1	Our wonderful world	Why is our world special?	F6 What is special about our world?
Summer 2	Belonging and transition	Where do we belong?	F5 Being special where do we belong?

Links to Understanding the World: people, culture and communities. RE also supports language, relationships and respectful curiosity. The Reception endpoint includes knowing some similarities and differences between religious and cultural communities, drawing on experience and what has been read in class.

EYFS progression in knowledge and skills

Focus	Sky Nursery	Ocean Nursery	Reception
Stories and people	To notice a special person or join in with a familiar story.	To talk about a special person and something that happens in a story.	To retell parts of a religious story and say why it matters to some people.
Celebrations	To notice something familiar in a family celebration.	To talk about something people do at a celebration.	To describe a celebration and notice a similarity or difference.
Special places	To recognise a familiar place where I feel welcome.	To talk about a special place and treat special objects carefully.	To identify a church or mosque and say why it is special to some people.
The world	To explore nature and help care for a living thing.	To notice something wonderful in nature and suggest how to care for it.	To talk about different reasons people care for the world.
Belonging	To recognise familiar people and feel part of nursery.	To name a group I belong to and show how to welcome someone.	To explain how people show belonging and identify different communities.

These "To" statements guide teaching and observation. Adapt the language and response to each child's age, stage and communication needs; children do not need to produce written evidence.

EYFS key knowledge vocabulary and provision

Focus	Knowledge to build towards in Reception	Vocabulary to introduce and revisit
Stories and people	Stories can be special to different people. Christians use the Bible; Muslims use the Qur'an. Jesus is special to Christians.	special, story, person; Bible, Christian, Muslim
Celebrations	Christians celebrate Jesus' birth at Christmas and his resurrection at Easter. Some families celebrate other festivals or have non-religious special times.	celebrate, family, special; Christmas, Easter, festival
Special places	A church is a place of worship for Christians; a mosque is a place of worship for Muslims. Homes and other places can be special too.	home, place, care; church, mosque, worship
The world	Religious and non-religious people can care for nature. Christians may describe the world as God's creation. People can hold different ideas about the world.	world, plant, animal, gentle; nature, creation, belief
Belonging	People belong to families, schools and other communities. Some belong to a faith community. Welcoming and caring help everyone feel included.	friend, family, welcome; belong, community, respect

Continuous provision throughout the year

Use inclusive family photographs and books; story baskets and puppets; a welcoming home corner; photographs of local places of worship; carefully selected celebration objects; and gardening or animal-care opportunities. Adults model curiosity, correct misconceptions sensitively and revisit a small number of words in meaningful conversation. Introduce faith-specific vocabulary through the actual stories, people and objects encountered.

Suggested evidence: a child retells part of a story, names a special place, notices a difference between celebrations, handles an object respectfully or explains a caring choice. Use observations and child voice to plan the next step.

Reception enquiries and Year 1 readiness

Half term and enquiry	Learning intention	Suggested experiences and evidence
Autumn 1 F1	To talk about a special story and why people value it.	Share a familiar story and an age-appropriate sacred story. Retell with puppets and notice the message.
Autumn 2 F2	To explain why a person is special to me or to others.	Talk about caring people and Jesus as a special person for Christians. Connect Christmas stories with who Christians celebrate.
Spring 1 F3	To describe a place that is special to some people.	Compare home, school, church and mosque photographs. Talk about what people do there and respectful behaviour.
Spring 2 F4	To talk about special times and notice similarities and differences.	Explore Easter and relevant family festivals through stories, objects and community voices. Revisit other celebrations at their actual time.
Summer 1 F6	To explain one way to care for our special world.	Explore a simple creation story as a belief held by some people. Compare reasons for caring and put one caring action into practice.
Summer 2 F5	To explain how we belong and welcome others.	Discuss families, class and faith communities. Use welcoming role play and reflect on belonging as children prepare for Year 1.

Year 1 ready: children have encountered Christianity and other beliefs, can talk about special stories, people, places and celebrations, notice some similarities and differences and express curiosity respectfully. Year 1 revisits these concrete foundations through named beliefs, symbols, belonging and sacred places.

Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 long term overview

Year	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Year 1	1.1 Who is a Christian and what do they believe? 1.6 How and why do we celebrate special and sacred times? part 1	1.5 What makes some places sacred?	1.7 What does it mean to belong to a faith community?
Year 2	1.2 Who is a Muslim and what do they believe? 1.3 Who is Jewish and what do they believe?	1.6 How and why do we celebrate special and sacred times? part 2	1.4 What can we learn from sacred books? 1.8 How should we care for others and the world, and why does it matter?
Year 3	L2.1 What do different people believe about God? L2.2 Why is the Bible important for Christians today	L2.5 Why are festivals important to religious communities? Part 1 L2.10 How do family life and festivals show what matters to Jewish people?	L2.4 Why do people pray? L2.7 What does it mean to be a Christian in Britain today?
Year 4	L2.3 Why is Jesus inspiring to some people? L2.6 Why do some people think that life is like a journey and what significant experiences mark this?	L2.5 Why are festivals important to religious communities? Part 2	L2.9 What can we learn from religions about deciding what is right and wrong? L2.8 What does it mean to be a Hindu in Britain today?
Year 5	U2.1 Why do some people think God exists? U2.4 If God is everywhere, why go to a place of worship?	U2.2 What would Jesus do?	U2.6 What does it mean to be a Muslim in Britain today? U2.10 Green religion? What do religious and non-religious worldviews teach about caring for the earth?
Year 6	U2.3 What do religions say to us when life gets hard? U2.5 Is it better to express your religion in arts and architecture or in charity and generosity?	U2.9 What can be done to reduce racism? Can Religion help? U2.7 What matters most to Christians and Humanists?	U2.8 What difference does it make to believe in ahimsa (harmlessness), grace and/or ummah (community)?

Progression through the three strands

Strand	EYFS	KS1	Lower KS2	Upper KS2
Believing	Sacred stories, special people and simple beliefs are explored through play, talk and artefacts.	Pupils recall beliefs, stories and sacred texts from Christians, Muslims and Jewish people.	Pupils describe beliefs about God, Jesus, prayer, sacred texts and festivals, making links to practice.	Pupils compare theistic, non-theistic and non-religious views, giving reasons and using sources of wisdom.
Expressing	Children encounter special places, times, celebrations and symbols using the senses.	Pupils name worship, festivals, symbols and places and say why they matter to communities.	Pupils describe how worship, festivals, journeys and identity are expressed in different communities.	Pupils evaluate expression through worship, art, architecture, charity, community action and moral life.
Living	Children talk about belonging, friendship, care and the natural world.	Pupils ask what belonging means and how people should care for others and the world.	Pupils connect faith, family life, prayer, life journeys and moral decisions to how people live.	Pupils analyse how beliefs shape choices about suffering, justice, racism, environment, community and values.

Enquiry across the strands

Children move from noticing and asking simple questions to describing, connecting and comparing, then explaining, reasoning and evaluating. Teachers make the distinction between a belief claim, an account of a practice and a pupil's own response clear. Provide examples of diversity within traditions as well as between them.

Religions and worldviews coverage

Religion / worldview	Where it appears in Shawclough LTPs	Coverage comment
Christianity	EYFS encounters; Y1 1.1/1.6/1.5/1.7; Y2 1.4/1.6/1.8; Y3 L2.1/L2.2/L2.5/L2.4/L2.7; Y4 L2.3/L2.6/L2.5/L2.9; Y5 U2.1/U2.4/U2.2/U2.10; Y6 U2.3/U2.5/U2.9/U2.7/U2.8	Met repeatedly across all phases; aligns with syllabus requirement for Christianity in each key stage.
Islam	Y1 1.5/1.7; Y2 1.2/1.4/1.6; Y3 L2.1/L2.4/L2.5; Y5 U2.6; Y6 U2.8 and U2.9	Strong KS1 and upper KS2 coverage; ensure local Muslim voices and lived examples are included.
Judaism	Y2 1.3/1.4/1.6; Y3 L2.10; possible links in sacred books and festivals	Explicit in KS1 and lower KS2; satisfies KS2 minimum with Y3 Jewish family life/festivals.
Hindu Dharma	Y4 L2.8; Y6 U2.8 ahimsa; possible wider links in prayer/festivals	Explicit KS2 coverage. Check Y4 L2.8 Part 2 label to ensure complete coverage.
Non-religious worldviews / Humanism	Y5 U2.1 and U2.10; Y6 U2.7; possible links to care, environment and ethics	Develops comparison with non-religious responses in upper KS2.
Local Rochdale context	Embedded through local community, places of worship, diversity, census and pupil/community voices.	Use visits, visitors and local examples to make RE meaningful and relevant.

Vocabulary progression

Year group	Indicative core vocabulary
EYFS	special, story, celebrate, belong, family, friend, thank you, world, care, place
Year 1	Christian, Muslim, God, Jesus, Allah, mosque, church, sacred, celebration, community
Year 2	Jewish, Torah, Bible, Qur'an, synagogue, Shabbat, festival, prayer, sacred book, creation
Year 3	belief, worship, prayer, Bible, Old Testament, New Testament, festival, Passover, Shabbat, disciple
Year 4	incarnation, pilgrimage, baptism, confirmation, Bar/Bat Mitzvah, Hindu, mandir, dharma, moral, guidance
Year 5	theist, atheist, agnostic, evidence, worship, ummah, Five Pillars, Gospel, stewardship, worldview
Year 6	suffering, resilience, Humanist, ahimsa, grace, generosity, justice, racism, charity, commitment

Nursery Sky: special, family, friend, story, care. Nursery Ocean: revisit these and introduce celebrate, place, belong, world and respect. Reception: build towards faith-specific terms introduced through the enquiries, including Christian, Muslim, Bible, Qur'an, church and mosque. Teach only words that have a clear meaning in the current encounter.

Across Years 1–6, the lists are indicative core vocabulary rather than a requirement to introduce every word in one unit. Model meanings, revisit previous vocabulary and support accurate use in talk and written responses.

Year group progression and endpoints

Year group	Progression focus	Religions / worldviews	By the end of the year, pupils should increasingly be able to...
EYFS	Discovering religions and worldviews through special stories, people, places, times, belonging and the natural world.	Christianity and other faiths/worldviews encountered through children's communities and experiences.	Children talk about stories, people and places that are special; show curiosity; recognise that people celebrate and belong in different ways.
Year 1	Introduce Christian beliefs and festivals, sacred places and belonging through concrete examples and personal response.	Christians, Muslims and faith communities.	Pupils name simple beliefs and practices, talk about celebrations and sacred places, and ask/respond to questions about belonging.
Year 2	Deepen KS1 understanding through Muslim and Jewish beliefs, festivals, sacred books and caring for others and the world.	Christians, Muslims, Jewish people and non-religious responses to care/values.	Pupils retell religious and moral stories, recognise sacred books and symbols, and explain simple reasons why people care or celebrate.
Year 3	Move into lower KS2 enquiry: beliefs about God, the Bible, festivals, Jewish family life, prayer and Christian life in Britain.	Christians, Muslims, Jewish people and wider religious communities.	Pupils make links between beliefs, stories and practices, use RE vocabulary more accurately, and compare how communities worship and celebrate.
Year 4	Develop understanding of Jesus, life journeys, festivals, moral decisions and Hindu life in Britain.	Christians, Hindus, wider religious communities and ethical perspectives.	Pupils describe significance, compare practices, and explain how beliefs can guide choices, identity and life events.
Year 5	Upper KS2 pupils consider arguments about God, Muslim life in Britain, worship, Jesus' values and environmental responsibility.	Christians, Muslims, non-religious worldviews and environmental worldviews.	Pupils give reasons, weigh up ideas, connect beliefs to action, and present thoughtful responses to big questions.
Year 6	Consolidate RE through suffering, arts and charity, anti-racism, Christian and Humanist values, ahimsa, grace and ummah.	Christians, Humanists, Hindus, Muslims and wider religious/non-religious perspectives.	Pupils explain similarities and differences, discuss ethical questions, and use evidence from religions/worldviews to justify balanced responses.

Units and assessment evidence

Year	Units taught	Curriculum progression	Evidence to collect
EYFS	F1-F6: stories, special people, special places, special times, belonging, the world	Learning through stories, role play, visitors, artefacts, celebration, talk, creativity and outdoor/nature links.	Photographs, floor books, child voice, drawings, role play, artefact exploration and adult observations.
Year 1	1.1, 1.6, 1.5, 1.7	Secure initial knowledge of Christianity through beliefs and festivals; explore sacred places and belonging with Christian, Muslim and Jewish examples as specified in the coverage.	Simple vocabulary, drawings/writing, oral retelling, pupil voice, labelled pictures, class discussions.
Year 2	1.2, 1.3, 1.6, 1.4, 1.8	Develop knowledge of Muslim and Jewish beliefs; revisit Christian and Muslim festivals; explore sacred books and caring for others and the world.	Retold stories, comparison charts, sacred book handling, responses to care/world questions.
Year 3	L2.1, L2.2, L2.5, L2.10, L2.4, L2.7	Develop lower KS2 enquiry by linking beliefs, sacred texts, festivals, Jewish family life, prayer and Christian living.	Written explanations, retrieval quizzes, festival comparisons, prayer reflections, book/work samples.
Year 4	L2.3, L2.6, L2.5, L2.9, L2.8	Deepen understanding of Jesus, life journeys, festivals, Hindu life and moral decision-making.	Reasoned answers, life journey timelines, Hindu/Christian comparison, moral dilemma responses.
Year 5	U2.1, U2.4, U2.2, U2.6, U2.10	Move into upper KS2 reasoning about God, Muslim life in Britain, places of worship, Jesus' teaching and environmental responsibility.	Arguments for/against, sources of wisdom, debate notes, extended writing, environmental worldview responses.
Year 6	U2.3, U2.5, U2.9, U2.7, U2.8	Consolidate RE through suffering, expression, generosity and anti-racism, Christian/Humanist values, ahimsa, grace and ummah.	Balanced conclusions, comparison essays, discussion evidence, end-of-primary RE portfolio samples.

Personal development and wellbeing

RE contributes to Shawclough's wider personal development programme. It helps children explore meaning, identity and values, understand different beliefs and build respectful relationships. It complements PSHCE, PSED and wider school experiences.

Ofsted's personal development and wellbeing evaluation considers spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, belonging, respect for difference and equitable access to opportunities. The links below show how our RE curriculum can contribute; evidence should demonstrate what children learn and experience.

Contribution	Links in Shawclough RE	Useful evidence
Spiritual development	Reception F1-F6 encourages wonder and reflection. Y5 U2.1 and Y6 U2.3 explore questions of belief, meaning and difficult experiences.	Children ask questions, consider different responses and explain an idea without being expected to adopt a belief.
Moral development	Y2 1.8, Y4 L2.9 and Y5 U2.10 explore caring, right and wrong and responsibility for the earth.	Children explain a caring choice and connect an action with a value or teaching.
Social development and belonging	Nursery belonging and transition, Reception F5 and Y1 1.7 develop understanding of welcome and community.	Children listen, cooperate and explain how to include someone. Pupil voice shows whether children feel respected.
Cultural understanding and respect	Sacred places, festivals and lived examples build understanding of religious and non-religious communities. Y6 U2.9 explicitly explores reducing racism.	Children compare accurately, recognise diversity within groups and challenge unfair stereotypes.
Wellbeing and inclusion	Provide sensitive discussion, accessible resources and flexible ways to respond. In Y6 U2.3, handle loss and hardship carefully and offer trusted-adult support.	Participation and pupil voice, including pupils with SEND and other barriers, show whether adaptations support access and belonging.

British values links include mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs, freedom to hold a belief or none, and respectful discussion. RE supports learning about religion or belief as a protected characteristic within the school's wider equality curriculum.