

# Thurrock

Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education  
2022–2027



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## Foreword

We are very pleased to commend the newly revised 2022 Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (RE) in Thurrock as a major contribution to an enhanced understanding of the values of life. We believe that religious education and a deeper appreciation of faith and belief can play an important part in supporting our Borough's tradition of respect and co-operation within and between its different communities.

Thurrock is committed to ensuring that our children and young people are able to learn and develop fully in all aspects of their lives. This includes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In an age where society is having to face up to challenging moral and cultural issues on a global scale, the insights and personal foundations that can be acquired through studying the world's great faith traditions and belief systems have never been more important or relevant.

This syllabus is a statutory requirement for maintained schools which do not have designation relating to religious character and for voluntary controlled schools, for children and young people aged between 4 and 19. We also know that it is used extensively by our Academy schools, which represents a vote of confidence in the continued relevance and usability of the material.

The work to review and update the Agreed Syllabus has been undertaken by the Thurrock Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE), which includes a number of Thurrock's RE teachers, elected Councillors, and leaders of our local faith communities. The review has been supported by a very experienced consultant from RE Today, Deborah Weston (RE Today Associate Adviser), and is in line with the latest government requirements.

We are sure that you will find this updated Syllabus informative and easy to use. After listening to the views of schools and teachers in Thurrock, SACRE took the decision to make small incremental changes and additions rather than a wholesale re-write. This means that much of the content will remain very recognisable to students and teachers alike. We hope you will be able to attend the training being offered so that you become familiar with the updated Syllabus. We also commend use of the supporting materials which are being made available on the SACRE website.

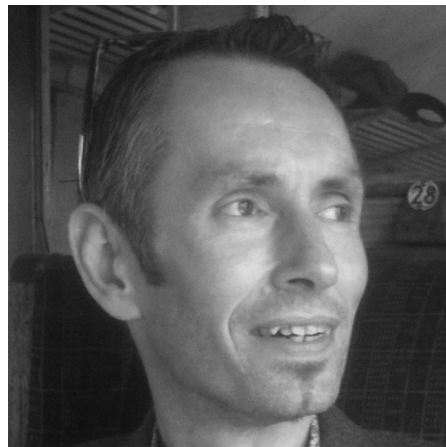
We are proud to commend this Syllabus and offer our grateful thanks to all those whose efforts have brought about the update. We feel sure it will offer much needed support to our local teachers and provide an interesting and challenging contribution to the education and wellbeing of Thurrock's children and young people.



Andrea Winstone  
Strategic Lead for School Effectiveness and SEND  
Children's Services



Phil Anderson  
Chair of Thurrock SACRE



## Introduction

This Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (RE) has been created for Thurrock SACRE and approved by Thurrock Council. It provides a syllabus for religious education for Thurrock schools.

Since 1944, all schools have been required to teach RE to all pupils on roll (with the exception that parents have the right to withdraw their children from the subject). Religious education remains part of the basic curriculum for all pupils.

The syllabus explains the value and purposes of RE for all pupils, and specifies for teachers what shall be taught in each age group. It provides a coherent framework for setting high standards of learning in RE and enabling pupils to reach their potential in the subject.

The new syllabus is the same as the previous syllabus in that it:

- outlines the **legal requirements for RE**
- includes a **principal aim for RE**, clarifying the purpose of the subject
- outlines the **breadth of study**, indicating which religions should be studied and when
- offers **key questions** at the heart of the syllabus
- develops **exemplar learning outcomes** for all key questions
- offers an outline of **knowledge/content** as a guide to teachers
- offers a **planning process** to support teachers.

The syllabus is updated in the following ways:

- It reflects a shift in language in the RE community toward the idea of organised and personal **worldviews** (see p. 19).
- It notes the focus in the 2019 Ofsted Education Inspection Framework on **curriculum** and supports teachers in planning a coherent curriculum.
- It reflects a growing interest in the RE community (and reflected in guidance from Ofsted) in different kinds of knowledge, including **substantive knowledge**, **disciplinary knowledge** and **personal knowledge** (see Section D3, p. 109 and in the booklet Building Progression through your new RE Agreed Syllabus on [www.retoday.org.uk/syllabus-resources/](http://www.retoday.org.uk/syllabus-resources/) Password: (removed)).
- It includes some additional units of work, reflecting the interest in **disciplinary methods** (Unit L2.5a) and also responding to important societal issues – **anti-racism** (Unit U2.9) and the **climate emergency** (Unit U2.10).
- It provides **extended guidance** within the syllabus document itself (e.g. on planning RE in special school settings) and online [www.retoday.org.uk/syllabus-resources/](http://www.retoday.org.uk/syllabus-resources/)

The syllabus is for implementation from Autumn 2022.

The syllabus is licensed for use in Thurrock schools from 2022 until 2027.

## The demographics of religion and belief in Thurrock and beyond

The 2011 census information sets the demographic context for our local authority areas, the region and the nation. We do not intend to educate pupils only for their current life, perhaps in a village or a town, but also for a plural nation and a diverse world. The purpose of RE includes enabling pupils to be ready to live well in a wider world: the region, the nation, the global community. Diversity is central to British RE: pupils might learn much from seeing the wider regional and national pictures and understanding our nation better.

CENSUS 2011 Area name	Population	Christian	Buddhist	Hindu	Jewish	Muslim	Sikh	Other religion	No religion	Religion not stated
<b>Thurrock</b>	<b>157,705</b>	<b>99,891</b>	<b>615</b>	<b>1,178</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>3,164</b>	<b>1,224</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>41,061</b>	<b>9,895</b>
		63.3%	0.4%	0.7%	0.1%	2.0%	0.8%	0.3%	26.0%	6.3%
<b>Essex</b>	<b>1,393,587</b>	<b>860,906</b>	<b>4,693</b>	<b>8,295</b>	<b>6,662</b>	<b>13,526</b>	<b>2,197</b>	<b>5,165</b>	<b>392,047</b>	<b>100,096</b>
		61.8%	0.3%	0.6%	0.5%	1.0%	0.2%	0.4%	28.1%	7.2%
<b>London</b>	<b>8,173,941</b>	<b>3,957,984</b>	<b>82,026</b>	<b>411,291</b>	<b>148,602</b>	<b>1,012,823</b>	<b>126,134</b>	<b>47,970</b>	<b>1,694,372</b>	<b>692,739</b>
		48.4%	1.0%	5.0%	1.8%	12.4%	1.5%	0.6%	20.7%	8.5%
<b>England</b>	<b>53,012,456</b>	<b>31,479,876</b>	<b>238,626</b>	<b>806,199</b>	<b>261,282</b>	<b>2,660,116</b>	<b>420,196</b>	<b>227,825</b>	<b>13,114,232</b>	<b>3,804,104</b>
		59.4%	0.5%	1.5%	0.5%	5.0%	0.8%	0.4%	24.7%	7.2%
<b>England and Wales</b>	<b>56,075,912</b>	<b>33,243,175</b>	<b>247,743</b>	<b>816,633</b>	<b>263,346</b>	<b>2,706,066</b>	<b>423,158</b>	<b>240,530</b>	<b>14,097,229</b>	<b>4,038,032</b>
		59.3%	0.4%	1.5%	0.5%	4.8%	0.8%	0.4%	25.1%	7.2%

Learners will benefit greatly from a clear and accurate understanding of these demographics. We will update this page when the results of the question about religion from the 2021 Census are available.

Note that the findings of the British Social Attitudes Survey 2018 (National Centre for Social Research), a national survey of around 3,000 adults, indicates a greater percentage of people (52%) identifying as having no religion. More information is available here:

[www.bsa.natcen.ac.uk/media/39293/1\\_bsa36\\_religion.pdf](http://www.bsa.natcen.ac.uk/media/39293/1_bsa36_religion.pdf) Among young people, aged 16-29, the percentage rises to 70% saying they have no religion: see the report into *Europe's Young Adults and Religion* by Stephen Bullivant [www.stmarys.ac.uk/research/centres/benedict-xvi/docs/2018-mar-europe-young-people-report-eng.pdf](http://www.stmarys.ac.uk/research/centres/benedict-xvi/docs/2018-mar-europe-young-people-report-eng.pdf)

## A1 The purpose of RE

- Religious education contributes dynamically to children's and young people's education in schools by provoking challenging questions about meaning and purpose in life, beliefs about God, ultimate reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.
- In RE pupils learn about and from religious and non-religious worldviews in local, national and global contexts, to discover, explore and consider different answers to these questions.
- Pupils learn to evaluate wisdom from different sources, to develop and express their insights in response, and to agree or disagree respectfully.
- Teaching therefore should equip pupils with systematic knowledge and understanding of a range of religious and non-religious worldviews, enabling them to develop their ideas, values and identities.
- It should develop in pupils an aptitude for dialogue, so that they can participate positively in society, with its diverse religious and non-religious worldviews.
- Pupils should gain and deploy the skills needed to understand, interpret and evaluate texts, sources of wisdom and authority and other evidence.
- Pupils should be given opportunities to reflect upon their own personal responses to the fundamental human questions to which religious and non-religious worldviews respond.
- Pupils should learn to articulate clearly and coherently their personal beliefs, ideas, values and experiences while respecting the right of others to differ.

This broad purpose of RE is captured in the principal aim, which is intended to be a shorthand version for day-to-day use. Teachers should use it for short-term and long-term planning, to remind them of the purposes articulated above.

### 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.

Schools might wish to devise a pupil-friendly version of this for themselves. Discussing this, using the full purpose and the principal aim, would be helpful for teachers in clarifying what RE is for in their school and classroom.

For example: 'RE explores big questions about life, in order to find out what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can make sense of religion and worldviews, and reflect on their own ideas and ways of living.'

### Ofsted 2019

The 2019 Ofsted Framework shows the importance of the 'intent' of the curriculum. This refers to 'the extent to which the school's curriculum sets out the knowledge and skills that pupils will gain at each key stage' (paragraph 168). This purpose and principal aim of RE helps to set out the intent of your RE curriculum, alongside the knowledge and skills your pupils will gain at each key stage in RE, which are set out in section C in this syllabus.

## A2 The aim(s) of RE

The threefold aim of RE elaborates the principal aim.

The curriculum for RE aims to ensure that all pupils:

- 1. Know about and understand a range of religious and non-religious worldviews<sup>1</sup>, so that they can:**
  - describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities and amongst individuals
  - identify, investigate and respond to questions posed, and responses offered, by some of the sources of wisdom<sup>2</sup> found in religious and non-religious worldviews
  - appreciate and appraise the nature, significance and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.
  
- 2. Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religious and non-religious worldviews, so that they can:**
  - explain, using reasoned arguments, their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities
  - express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value, including ethical issues
  - appreciate and appraise varied dimensions of religion.<sup>3</sup>
  
- 3. Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religious and non-religious worldviews, so that they can:**
  - investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding creatively
  - enquire into what enables different individuals and communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all
  - articulate clearly beliefs, values and commitments in order to explain why they may be important in their own and other people's lives.

Teachers should consider how their teaching contributes towards the principal aim of RE (p. 8) and how they help pupils to achieve the threefold aim above.

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<sup>1</sup> The phrase 'religious and non-religious worldviews' is used in this document to include what are sometimes called 'organised' religions (e.g. Buddhism, Christianity, Hindu Dharma, Islam, Judaism, Sikhi) and 'organised' non-religious worldviews (e.g. Humanism). It also incorporates the implication that people have personal worldviews, which may reflect any organised tradition to which they belong, but also contain individual and personal elements. See p. 19 for more on worldviews.

<sup>2</sup> The sources of wisdom found in religions and worldviews will include the key texts, the teachings of key leaders, and key thinkers from different traditions and communities. Examples include the Bible, the Torah and the Bhagavad Gita; the Buddha, Jesus Christ, the Prophet Muhammad, Guru Nanak and humanist philosophers. Other sources of wisdom might come from texts, thinkers, leaders and scientists in the contemporary world as well as from experience and informed personal reflection and conscience.

<sup>3</sup> The RE Programme of Study usually refers to 'religious and non-religious worldviews' to describe the field of enquiry. Here, however, the aim is to consider religion itself as a phenomenon which has both positive and negative features, and is open to many interpretations: in this aspect of the aims, pupils are to engage with the concept of religion and non-religion, not merely with individual examples, and similar critiques should apply to both.



## B1 Legal requirements: What does the legislation in England say?

### **RE is for all pupils:**

- RE 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).<sup>4</sup> It is a necessary part of a 'broad and balanced curriculum'.
- 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'.<sup>5</sup>

### **RE is determined locally, not nationally:**

- A locally agreed syllabus is a statutory syllabus for RE recommended by an Agreed Syllabus Conference for adoption by a local authority.<sup>6</sup>
- Local authority maintained schools without a religious character must follow the locally agreed syllabus.
- 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.
- Foundation schools and voluntary controlled schools with a religious character should follow the locally agreed syllabus, unless parents request RE in accordance with the trust deed or religious designation of the school.
- Religious education is also compulsory in faith and non-faith academies and free schools, as set out in their funding agreements. Academies may use their locally agreed syllabus, or a different locally agreed syllabus (with permission of the SACRE concerned) or devise their own curriculum.

### **RE is plural:**

- The RE curriculum drawn up by a SACRE, or 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'.<sup>7</sup>
- The agreed syllabus has a duty 'to take care that information or knowledge included in the curriculum is conveyed in a pluralistic manner' and 'must accord equal respect to different religious convictions, and to non-religious belief'.<sup>8</sup> Note that the term 'religion' encompasses both religious and non-religious beliefs.<sup>9</sup>

While education policy changes, the legal requirement for RE for all registered pupils remains unchanged. RE is an entitlement for all pupils, unless they have been withdrawn by their parents from some or all of the RE curriculum.

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<sup>4</sup> School Standards and Framework Act 1998, Schedule 19; Education Act 2002, section 80.

<sup>5</sup> The Education (Special Educational Needs) (England) (Consolidation) (Amendment) Regulations 2006 Regulation 5A.

<sup>6</sup> Education Act 1996 Schedule 31.

<sup>7</sup> Education Act 1996 section 375.

<sup>8</sup> [www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/r-fox-v-ssfe.pdf](http://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/r-fox-v-ssfe.pdf) 'Equal respect' does not entail equal time.

<sup>9</sup> In accordance with Human Rights Act 1988.

This agreed syllabus builds on good practice from the 2004 *Non-statutory Framework for RE*, produced by the then Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, the core ideas in the RE Council's non-statutory *Framework* from 2013<sup>10</sup>, elements of the 2018 Commission on RE final report,<sup>11</sup> the Ofsted 2019 Education Inspection Framework, the Ofsted RE Research Review 2021<sup>12</sup>, and the REC 2022 Draft Handbook on religion and worldviews<sup>13</sup>.

### Right of withdrawal

This was first granted when religious education was religious *instruction* and carried with it the connotation of induction into the Christian faith. RE has been very different from this for some time. It is inclusive and wide-ranging, exploring a range of religious and non-religious worldviews. However, in the UK, parents still have the right to withdraw their children from RE on the grounds that they wish to provide their own religious education. (School Standards and Framework Act 1998 S71 (3)). This will be the parents' responsibility. However, it is good practice to talk to parents to ensure that they understand the aims and value of RE before honouring this right. Students aged 18 or over have the right to withdraw themselves from RE.

For more guidance on withdrawal, see [www.natre.org.uk/membership/guidance-on-withdrawal/](http://www.natre.org.uk/membership/guidance-on-withdrawal/)

### B1.1 RE, academies and free schools

Free schools are academies in law and have the same requirement to provide RE and collective worship. In this document, any reference to academies includes free schools.

As set out in their funding agreements, all academies are required to provide RE for all pupils, from Reception to Sixth Form, except those whose parents exercise their right to withdrawal.

An academy must adopt a syllabus for RE. There is no requirement for an academy to adopt a locally agreed syllabus, as long as its own RE syllabus meets the requirements for a locally agreed syllabus, set out in section 375(3) of the Education Act 1996 and paragraph (5) of Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The requirements are that a syllabus must 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main, Christian while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'.

RE is not subject to nationally prescribed purpose of study, aims, attainment targets, and assessment arrangements, but it is subject to inspection. Where schools are not using an agreed syllabus, standards will be judged in relation to the expectations set out in the RE Council's *Curriculum Framework for Religious Education in England* (2013).

The Agreed Syllabus 2022–2027 for Thurrock fulfils the legal requirements set out above, has its roots in the REC's *Framework* (2013), and takes account of some key messages from the 2018 Commission on RE final report, the Ofsted 2019 Education Inspection Framework, the Ofsted RE Research Review 2021, and the REC 2022 Draft Handbook on religion and worldviews. It is written to support academies in meeting the requirements of their funding agreements. Academies are encouraged to adopt the syllabus, taking advantage of the resources and support that it offers.

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<sup>10</sup> A Curriculum Framework for Religious Education in England (REC 2013).

<sup>11</sup> Religion and Worldviews: the way forward (REC 2018).

<sup>12</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/publications/research-review-series-religious-education/research-review-series-religious-education](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/research-review-series-religious-education/research-review-series-religious-education)

<sup>13</sup> [www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/projects/draft-handbook-and-nse/](http://www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/projects/draft-handbook-and-nse/)

## B2 What worldviews are to be taught?

This agreed syllabus requires that all pupils study Christianity in each key stage. In addition, pupils will study the principal religions represented in the UK, in line with the law. These are Islam, Hindu Dharma, Sikhi, Buddhism and Judaism. Furthermore, children from families where non-religious worldviews are held are represented in almost all our classrooms. Non-religious worldviews, including ‘organised’ examples such as Humanism, will also be the focus for study.

### Religious traditions are to be studied in depth as follows:

4–5s Reception	Children will encounter Christians and people of other faiths, as part of their growing sense of self, their own community and their place within it.
5–7s Key Stage 1	Christians and Muslims or Jewish people
7–11s Key Stage 2	Christians, Muslims, Hindus and Jewish people
11–14s Key Stage 3	Christians, Muslims, Sikhs and Buddhists
14–16s Key Stage 4	Two religions required, usually including Christianity. This will be through a course in Religious Studies or Religious Education leading to a qualification approved under Section 96 <sup>14</sup>
16–19s RE for all	Religions and worldviews to be selected by schools and colleges as appropriate.

### Important notes:

This is the **minimum requirement**. Many schools may wish to go beyond the minimum.

- **The range of religious groups in the UK.** Groups such as Jehovah’s Witnesses, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Bahá’í faith or the Jains are not excluded from study in this scheme for RE. Schools are always advised to make space for the worldviews of the local community, which is why the table above expresses minimum requirements.
- Schools should consider the pupils they serve in deciding whether to go beyond the minimum entitlements to learning about religious and non-religious worldviews.
- Notice the language: Christians rather than Christianity, Muslims rather than Islam. This is to reflect the fact that RE starts with encounters with living faiths rather than the belief structures of traditions. This also recognises the diversity within and between people of the same and different religions.
- Notice that many Sikhs prefer the term *Sikhi* instead of *Sikhism*; *Sikhi* is a verb and signifies that this faith is not just about a system of belief, it is a path to follow, a way of life – about learning to be human. The term ‘Sikh’ comes from the word *sikhna* which means ‘to learn’: hence a Sikh is a learner.
- **Non-religious worldviews.** Good practice in RE, as well as European and domestic legislation, has established the principle that RE in schools without a religious character should be inclusive of both religions and non-religious worldviews. Schools should ensure that the content and delivery of the RE curriculum are inclusive in this respect.
- This syllabus requires that, in addition to the religions required for study at each key stage, non-religious worldviews should also be explored in such a way as to ensure that pupils develop mutual respect and tolerance of those with different worldviews. This is enabled through the following key questions: L2.6, L2.9, U2.1, U2.5, U2.7, 3.1, 3.4, 3.9, 3.10 and 3.12.
- Learning from four religions across a key stage is demanding: the syllabus does not recommend tackling six religions in a key stage. Depth is more important than overstretched breadth. Schools are encouraged to teach less but teach it better.
- Key questions in this syllabus allow schools to draw in different traditions where they fit the theme and question, and where there are representatives of those traditions in the school and local community.

<sup>14</sup> Section 96 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000. This requires maintained schools to provide only qualifications approved by the Secretary of State. <https://section96.education.gov.uk/> and <https://register.ofqual.gov.uk/>

## B3 Time for religious education

Schools have a statutory responsibility to deliver religious education to all pupils, except those withdrawn by parents (see p. 14).

**Schools must ensure that sufficient time is given in order to enable pupils to meet the expectations set out in this agreed syllabus, ensuring that the curriculum is coherent and shows progression, particularly across transitions between key stages.**

There is no single correct way of making appropriate provision for RE as long as the outcomes are met.

In order to deliver the aims and expected standards of the syllabus effectively, the expectation is that there is **a minimum allocation of 5 per cent of curriculum time for RE**. This is set out in the table below, and based on the most recent national guidance.

4–5s	<b>36 hours of RE per year</b> (e.g. 50 minutes a week or some short sessions implemented through continuous provision)
5–7s	<b>36 hours of tuition per year</b> (e.g. an hour a week, or less than an hour a week plus a series of RE days)
7–11s	<b>45 hours of tuition per year</b> (e.g. an hour a week, or a series of RE days or weeks amounting to 45+ hours of RE)
11–14s	<b>45 hours of tuition per year</b> (e.g. an hour a week)
14–16s	<b>5% of curriculum time, or 70 hours of tuition across the key stage</b> (e.g. an hour a week for 5 terms, or 50 minutes per week, supplemented with off-timetable RE days)
16–19s	<b>Allocation of time for RE for all should be clearly identifiable.</b>

### Important notes:

- **RE is legally required for all pupils.** Plural RE that conveys and accords equal respect to different religions and non-religious worldviews (e.g. Humanism) is a core subject and an entitlement for all pupils throughout their schooling. For schools offering GCSE short course RE in Y9 and Y10, there is still a requirement that there is identifiable RE in Y11. Note that teachers should ensure that KS4 accords equal respect to religious *and* non-religious worldviews. Following a GCSE course does not automatically fulfil this requirement.
- **RE is different from assembly.** Curriculum time for RE is distinct from the time spent on collective worship or school assembly, even though making links between the collective worship and the purposes and themes of RE would be good practice. The times given above are for religious education.
- **Flexible delivery of RE is often good practice:** an RE themed day, or week of study can complement – but not usually replace – the regular programme of timetabled lessons.
- **RE should be taught in clearly identifiable time.** There is a common frontier between RE and such subjects as literacy, citizenship or PSHE. However, the times given above are explicitly for the clearly identifiable teaching of religious education. Where creative curriculum planning is used, schools must ensure that RE objectives are clear. In EYFS, teachers should be able to indicate the opportunities they are providing to integrate RE into children’s learning.
- **Coherence and progression.** Whilst schools are expected to make their own decisions about how to divide up curriculum time, schools must ensure that sufficient time is given to RE so that pupils can meet the expectations set out in the locally agreed syllabus and this handbook to provide coherence and progression in RE learning. Any schools in which head teachers and governors do not plan to allocate sufficient curriculum time for RE are unlikely to be able to enable pupils to achieve appropriate standards in their RE.

## C1 Curriculum design in RE

Teachers should be clear about how their curriculum fits together and be able to explain why they teach in units and content in the order in which they do it. This page includes some key ideas to bear in mind when planning your RE curriculum.

### *Your RE curriculum needs to be structured so that it...*

#### ...makes sense to pupils

- Offer a clear structure for learning: in this syllabus, units are based around the three strands of Believing, Expressing, Living (see syllabus pp. 20–21). Each strand is broken down into ‘threads’, so that teachers can see what learning has gone before and what is to follow. Help pupils to see the narrative of your curriculum, to build on their prior learning as they move through the school.
- Use a good grounding of systematic study of individual religions to prepare pupils for thematic study, where they compare religions. For example, you will find that studying two religions separately in the first two terms and then comparing them in the summer term will help pupils to make sense of and build on their learning through the year.

#### ...focuses on core concepts

- Select key ideas and concepts at the heart of religious and non-religious worldviews.
- Explore these from different perspectives to enrich understanding (e.g. asking how a religious person or a non-religious person might respond to a key question or idea, or how adherents from different places, times or denominations may respond).
- In general, going deeper is preferable to going broader, given the time constraints. Don’t focus on coverage – focus on understanding.

#### ...allows pupils to encounter diverse examples of religion and worldviews

- Offer pupils contemporary, contextual accounts, rather than implying that there is a generic Christianity, Islam or atheism that always applies to all followers.
- Show something of the diversity of religion/worldviews (across time and place; within and between traditions) by using examples and case studies.
- Get pupils into texts, not just short quotes, developing skills of reading and interpretation.
- Show connections and differences across religions and beliefs.
- Explore religious and non-religious worldviews.
- Note that ‘worldviews’ can be individual and organised, with overlaps and fuzzy edges. (The religions traditionally studied in RE may be seen as ‘organised’ worldviews, but individual believers within those traditions will have their own worldviews that have common features but are not identical.)

#### ...enables pupils to embed learning in their long-term memory

- Clarify technical terms and check pupil understanding regularly.
- Find creative ways to enable pupils to handle and absorb core knowledge.
- Give pupils repeated opportunities to engage with content.
- Give pupils a chance to revisit and recall knowledge – in thoughtful and engaging ways (i.e. not just quizzing!). For example, revisit through presenting images or texts from previous units for pupils to label, describe, annotate and explain.

#### ...makes space for pupils’ own beliefs/worldviews

- Allow pupils to articulate ideas, with reasons, arguments, rebuttals and responses – but leaving space for ambiguity and contradiction.
- Recognise the significant number of non-religious pupils in RE – and make space for them as a focus for study. What do they believe and why, how do they live and why?

#### ...encourages pupils’ personal development, applying their learning to living

- Enable pupils to disagree respectfully.
- Engage pupils in handling and applying their learning.
- Give opportunities for pupils to make connections between the ideas studied, with the world around them, and with their own worldviews.

**See Section E4 (p. 121) Creating a coherent curriculum: long-term planning, and**

[www.retoday.org.uk/syllabus-resources/](http://www.retoday.org.uk/syllabus-resources/) Password: **(removed)**

## C2 Worldviews in RE

This syllabus refers to religious and non-religious worldviews throughout. The term ‘worldview’ encompasses a broad range of ideas, incorporating the religious and non-religious. Traditionally, RE has examined religious worldviews by looking at the traditional beliefs, teachings and practices of the world religions (Buddhism, Christianity etc.). Recent developments in RE, such as those described in the 2022 REC Draft Handbook on religion and worldviews, differentiate between organised or institutional worldviews and individual worldviews.

### Organised worldviews

Organised worldviews include the traditional religions studied in RE (Buddhism, Christianity, Hindu Dharma, Islam, Judaism and Sikhi). They usually provide a way of understanding the world, answers on the big questions, and instructions on how to live. Organised worldviews may include formal structures, agreed teachings and official practices.

Some traditions are more ‘organised’ than others. For example, within Christianity the Roman Catholic Church has centralised institutions that lead and direct Catholics worldwide. Islam, on the other hand, has strands of traditions that hold core beliefs in common (such as the Prophethood of Muhammad and the divine revelation of the Qur’an) but which differ in historical development and practice (such as Sunni and Shi’a traditions). Both Christianity and Islam are explored as examples of organised worldviews in this syllabus, but pupils should have opportunities to see how there is not a single model of ‘organised’ worldviews that applies to all.

### Individual worldviews

Many people around the world are part of ‘organised worldviews’, and of course that influences their individual worldview. However, an individual’s own worldview may not necessarily reflect the official or traditional beliefs and teachings of the organised worldview. The REC Draft Handbook applies the terms organised/institutional/individual worldviews to the object of study, the content of RE.

Many people in the UK have non-religious worldviews. Some may be active members of Humanists UK, who present a form of organised non-religious worldview. Many non-religious people, however, have individual worldviews that draw on a wide range of influences – some from within religious traditions (such as belief in an afterlife or angels, or practising mindfulness meditation) even when they do not see themselves as members of a religious tradition. Non-religiousness is not connected to any particular organised worldview, and individuals may have hugely diverse and occasionally overlapping personal worldviews.

### Personal worldviews

Everybody has a personal worldview – it is a way of describing how we encounter the world, including our own place in it, whether or not we have thought about it. It is shaped by our experience and environment, but it also shapes *how* we experience life, and how we encounter our environment. It is the story that we tell ourselves in response to life, shaping how we make sense of the world, ourselves, and others. We are inescapably placed within our context, within our story, within our worldview. The REC’s Draft Handbook applies the term ‘personal worldviews’ to pupils and teachers within the classroom – i.e. the learners, to differentiate from the individual worldviews of adherents being studied in lessons.

### Using the idea of worldviews in this syllabus

This syllabus uses the idea of worldviews as a way of allowing for some flexibility in the presentation of traditional religions – acknowledging the diversity within traditions, geographically and across time. It also enables pupils to recognise that members of religious traditions may have individual worldviews that differ. The idea of personal worldviews applies to pupils’ own perspectives within the RE classroom.

### C3 Religious education key questions: an overview

	FS (Discovering)	KS1 (Exploring)	Lower KS2 (Connecting)	Upper KS2 (Connecting)	KS3 (Applying/interpreting)
<b>Believing</b> (Religious beliefs, teachings, sources; questions about meaning, purpose and truth)		1.1 Who is a Christian and what do they believe? 1.2 Who is a Muslim and what do they believe? 1.3 Who is Jewish and what do they believe?	L2.1 What do different people believe about God?	U2.1 Why do some people believe God exists?	3.1 Do we need to prove God's existence?
	F1 Which stories are special and why?	1.4 What can we learn from sacred books?	L2.2 Why is the Bible so important for Christians today?		3.2 Does living biblically mean obeying the whole Bible?
	F2 Which people are special and why?		L2.3 Why is Jesus inspiring to some people?	U2.2 What would Jesus do? Can people live by the values of Jesus in the twenty-first century?	3.3 What is so radical about Jesus?
				U2.3 What do religions say to us when life gets hard?	3.4 Is death the end? Does it matter? 3.5 Why is there suffering? Are there any good solutions?
<b>Expressing</b> (Religious and spiritual forms of expression; questions about identity and diversity)	F3. What places are special and why?	1.5 What makes some places sacred?	L2.4 Why do people pray?	U2.4 If God is everywhere, why go to a place of worship?	3.6 Should religious buildings be sold to feed the starving?
	F4. What times are special and why?	1.6 How and why do we celebrate special and sacred times?	L2.5 Why are festivals important to religious communities? L2.5a* How do people from religious and non-religious communities celebrate key festivals? L2.6 Why do some people think that life is a journey and what significant experiences mark this?	U2.5 Is it better to express your beliefs in arts and architecture or in charity and generosity?  U2.9*** What can be done to reduce racism? What can we learn from religious and non-religious worldviews?	3.7 How can people express the spiritual through the arts?

	FS (Discovering)	KS1 (Exploring)	Lower KS2 (Connecting)	Upper KS2 (Connecting)	KS3 (Applying/interpreting)
<b>Living</b> (Religious practices and ways of living; questions about values and commitments)	F5. Being special: where do we belong?	1.7 What does it mean to belong to a faith community?	L2.7 What does it mean to be a Christian in Britain today? L2.8 What does it mean to be a Hindu in Britain today? L2.10** How do family life and festivals show what matters to Jewish people?	U2.6 What does it mean to be a Muslim in Britain today?	3.8 What is good and what is challenging about being a teenage Sikh or Buddhist or Muslim in Britain today?
					3.9 Should happiness be the purpose of life?
		1.8 How should we care for others and the world, and why does it matter?	L2.9 What can we learn from religions about deciding what is right and wrong?	U2.7 What matters most to Christians and Humanists?	3.10 Does religion help people to be good?
	F6. What is special about our world?			U2.8 What difference does it make to believe in ahimsa (harmlessness), grace, and/or Ummah (community)?	3.11 What difference does it make to believe in...?
				U2.10*** Green religion? What do religious and non-religious worldviews teach about caring for the Earth?	3.12 Is religion a power for peace or a cause of conflict in the world today?
			<i>* This unit is optional but can be integrated with L2.5. It offers a way of looking at Christmas through different academic disciplines. ** If schools have not done the systematic unit on Jewish people (1.3) in KS1, they should include this systematic unit in LKS2.</i>	<i>*** These units are optional. They could be done in addition to the other UKS2 questions or in place of a question in the same strand.</i>	



## **KS1 Units of Study**

## Key question 1.1: Who is a Christian and what do they believe?

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.

<b>Strand / Questions / Religions</b>	<b>Learning outcomes</b> (intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes):	<b>Suggested content for learning:</b> Teachers can select content from these examples and add more of their own.
<p><b>Strand:</b> Believing</p> <p><b>Recommended Y1</b></p> <p><b>Questions in this thread:</b> 1.2 Who is a Muslim and what do they believe? 1.3 Who is Jewish and what do they believe? L2.1 What do different people believe about God? U2.1 Why do some people believe God exists? 3.1 Do we need to prove God's existence?</p> <p><b>Worldviews:</b> Christians</p>	<p>Teachers will enable pupils to achieve some of these outcomes, as appropriate to their age and stage:</p> <p><b>Emerging:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Talk about the fact that Christians believe in God and follow the example of Jesus (A1).</b></li> <li>• <b>Recognise some Christian symbols and images used to express ideas about God (A3).</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Expected:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Talk about some simple ideas about Christian beliefs about God and Jesus (A1).</b></li> <li>• <b>Re-tell a story that shows what Christians might think about God, in words, drama and pictures, suggesting what it means (A2).</b></li> <li>• <b>Talk about issues of good and bad, right and wrong arising from the stories (C3).</b></li> <li>• <b>Ask some questions about believing in God and offer some ideas of their own (C1).</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Exceeding:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Make links between what Jesus taught and what Christians believe and do (A2).</b></li> <li>• <b>Respond thoughtfully to a piece of Christian music and a Bible text that inspired it (B1).</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share stories that help to show how Christians think of God e.g. the book of Jonah in the Old Testament, the Annunciation (Luke 1:26–56), the lost son (Luke 15:11–32) and Pentecost (Acts 2:1–13).</li> <li>• Describe some of the beliefs that Christian traditions (organised worldviews) teach about God e.g. all-powerful, loving, close to every person, forgiving.</li> <li>• Look at art and recognise some symbols and images used to express ideas about God.</li> <li>• Listen to pieces of music that express ideas about God.</li> <li>• Talk to Christians about what they believe about God (personal worldviews).</li> <li>• Give opportunities for pupils to reflect on and express their own big questions about life and God, in particular through discussion, art, music and drama e.g responding to the question 'Where is God?' through art.</li> <li>• Using a suitable children's Bible (e.g. <i>The Lion Storyteller Bible</i> or <i>New International Children's Version</i>), share stories that show the importance of Jesus to Christians e.g. a parable, a miracle, a teaching of Jesus, birth and death and resurrection of Jesus.</li> <li>• Linking with these stories, describe some of the beliefs that Christians hold about Jesus e.g. that he was kind to people in need, that he performed miracles, that he is the son of God, that he lives.</li> <li>• Investigate how Christians follow teaching from the Bible about how to live their lives e.g. prayer and worship, treating others kindly. Hear and think about some prayers Christians use. Note that not all Christians practise their faith in the same ways.</li> <li>• Experience thanking and being thanked, praising and being praised, and connect this experience simply to an idea about worship.</li> <li>• Many pupils have no personal belief in God but have just learnt lots about people who do. Give them the opportunity to comment on the idea of God for themselves, such as whether or not it has any meaning in their lives.</li> </ul>

## **Upper Key Stage 2 Units of Study**

## Key question U2.6: What does it mean to be a Muslim in Britain today?

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.

<b>Strand / Questions / Religions</b>	<b>Learning outcomes</b> (intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes):	<b>Suggested content for learning:</b> Teachers can select content from these examples and add more of their own.
<p><b>Strand:</b> Living</p> <p><b>Recommended Y5</b></p> <p><b>Questions in this thread:</b> F5: Where do we belong? 1.7 What does it mean to belong to a faith community? L2.7 What does it mean to be a Christian in Britain today? L2.8 What does it mean to be a Hindu in Britain today? 3.8 What is good and what is challenging about being a teenage Buddhist, Sikh or Muslim in Britain today?</p> <p><b>Worldviews:</b> Muslims</p>	<p>Teachers will enable pupils to achieve some of these outcomes, as appropriate to their age and stage:</p> <p><b>Emerging:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the Five Pillars of Islam and give examples of how these affect the everyday lives of Muslims (A1).</li> <li>• Identify three reasons why the Holy Qur'an is important to Muslims, and how it makes a difference to how they live (B1).</li> </ul> <p><b>Expected:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make connections between Muslim practice of the Five Pillars and their beliefs about God and the Prophet Muhammad (A2).</li> <li>• Describe and reflect on the significance of the Holy Qur'an to Muslims (B1).</li> <li>• Describe the forms of guidance a Muslim uses and compare them to forms of guidance experienced by the pupils (A2).</li> <li>• Make connections between the key functions of the mosque and the beliefs of Muslims (A1).</li> </ul> <p><b>Exceeding:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comment thoughtfully on the value and purpose of religious practices and rituals in a Muslim's daily life (B1).</li> <li>• Answer the title key question from different perspectives, including their own (C1).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find out what pupils already know about Islam (e.g. from key question 1.2); how many Muslims do they think there are in Britain and in your local area? Find out and talk about the information from the 2011 Census.</li> <li>• Explore the practice, meaning and significance of the Five Pillars of Islam as an expression of ibadah (worship and belief in action); Shahadah (belief in one God and his Prophet); salat (daily prayer); sawm (fasting); zakat (alms giving); hajj (pilgrimage). How do these affect the lives of Muslims, moment by moment, daily, annually, in a lifetime?</li> <li>• Think about and discuss the value and challenge for Muslims of following the Five Pillars, and how they might make a difference to individual Muslims and to the Muslim community (ummah). Investigate how they are practised by Muslims in Britain today, noting that practice varies – not all Muslims practise all the pillars. Consider what beliefs, practices and values are significant in pupils' lives.</li> <li>• Talk about the Shahadah ('There is no god except Allah') and use the 99 names of Allah to explore the attributes of God. Make links with belief in tawhid. Explore Islamic art, looking at shape, pattern, colour and calligraphy. Ask: what is their significance for Muslims, in the context of tawhid? (NB link with key question L2.1.)</li> <li>• Consider the importance of the Holy Qur'an for Muslims: how it was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad, how it is used, treated, learnt. Share examples of stories and teaching, e.g. Surah 1, Al-Fatihah (The Opening); Surah 17 (the Prophet's Night Journey). Find out about people who memorise the Qur'an and why (hafiz, hafiza).</li> <li>• Find out about the difference between the authority of the Qur'an and other forms of guidance for Muslims: Sunnah (practices, customs and traditions of the Prophet Muhammad); Hadith (sayings and actions of the Prophet Muhammad).</li> <li>• Reflect on what forms of guidance pupils turn to when they need guidance or advice, and examine ways in which these are different from the Qur'an for Muslims.</li> <li>• Investigate the design and purpose of a mosque/masjid and explain how and why the architecture and activities, such as preparing for prayer, reflect Muslim beliefs.</li> </ul>