

As part of the review of the syllabus, North Yorkshire SACRE ran an art competition in schools to design the front cover of the new RE Agreed Syllabus. The winner, as voted by members of the Agreed Syllabus Conference, was Libby Hickson. Entries which were highly commended are also included in the syllabus.

North Yorkshire SACRE would like to thank all pupils who entered the competition.



“ I chose to draw a tree to symbolise the earth and that we are all the fruits of it and you can’t have a tree without leaves, so each leaf represents the cultures and aspects of life as you can’t have life without them either. You will also have noticed I have drawn several apples on the branches of the tree and one is bright red. This is insinuating that just because someone is different they are still part of a bigger picture along with all races, religions and beliefs. Creating a border around my tree are a number of religious symbols and together they create a family of people that, according to God, should treat one another like brother and sister.”

Libby Hickson, age 11, Scalby School

Forward

Our vision in North Yorkshire is of a community where people of different beliefs and religions live harmoniously side by side, displaying mutual respect, understanding and friendship. It is essential that our children and young people are supported in developing these qualities and, whilst growing in confidence, achieve a level of critical awareness that helps them to become builders and shapers of a better North Yorkshire. This agreed syllabus, developed with SACRE and the young people and teachers of North Yorkshire, seeks to support schools in this work.

Religious Education, through this Agreed Syllabus, will encourage and enable pupils to explore their own beliefs, values and traditions and those of others in meaningful and engaging ways. It will encourage pupils to share their diverse range of experiences and grow individually and together with sensitivity and respect towards people of all faiths and none.

This Agreed Syllabus provides many opportunities for RE teaching and learning to challenge stereotypical views and to appreciate difference positively. The syllabus enables all pupils to consider the impact of people's beliefs on their own actions and ways of life.

It provides a key context to develop children and young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination.

Increasing diversity is part of the demographic picture, and the wider region is home to many diverse and active faith communities. We are educating children in their own locality, but also to live in a wider region, the UK and globally.

Cynthia Welbourn

Director of Children and Young People's Services

This new RE Agreed Syllabus has been developed in consultation with a team of teachers, faith representatives and SACRE members, with support from local authority and national advisers. The team consulted teachers and pupils in North Yorkshire to gather their views on effective learning in RE.

We are very proud of our SACRE in North Yorkshire and want to ensure that teachers and schools are supported effectively so they are able to facilitate good learning and teaching in RE.

SACRE is confident that the new syllabus, along with the supporting materials for teachers, will ensure that Religious Education in North Yorkshire schools is relevant, engaging and challenging. We commend it to governors, parents and teachers.

Nasr Moussa Emam

Chair of North Yorkshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

*What do North Yorkshire pupils say?
My favourite thing about RE is...*

“ How it enables you to think outside the box and discover ideas about life and religion which you would never have previously contemplated, adding your own ideas and dramatically changing what you think in the space of a lesson! ”

Annabelle Scott, Year 13

Introduction

North Yorkshire is sometimes seen as being monocultural. Increasing diversity, however, is also part of the demographic picture, and the wider region is home to many diverse and active faith communities (see appendix 2). We are educating children in their own locality, but also to live in a wider region, the UK and globally.

Alongside numerous historic churches, Yorkshire and the wider region has a rapidly growing number of modern mosques, Gurdwara, temples and faith centres, thriving with followers of many diverse faith traditions. This is only to be expected in the UK where a rich and continuing tradition of welcoming and embracing different cultures and new ideas is a strand of national life. There are also many people who follow non-religious life stances. This is also a rich and diverse population including Humanists and others who may follow a spiritual, but non-religious way of life.

Religious Education, through this Agreed Syllabus, will encourage and enable pupils to explore their own beliefs, values and traditions and those of others in meaningful and engaging ways. RE will encourage pupils to share their diverse range of experiences and grow individually and together with sensitivity and respect towards people of all faiths and none.



Francesca Drury, age 9, Wistow Primary School

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SECTION 1: Why?

What is the place of RE in the Whole Curriculum?

The aim of RE

In North Yorkshire's schools, Religious Education is concerned to help pupils develop open, sensitive, reflective and critical approaches to understanding humankind's varied religions and beliefs, exploring practices, values, beliefs and lifestyles, relating these to their own experiences and to questions of everyday life.

This aim has five equal elements to it:



The Value and Importance of RE

This statement intends to express clearly why we do RE and what the subject offers to children and young people.

Good RE gives our children and young people opportunities to explore the biggest questions of human life in the light of religious, philosophical and spiritual ideas. Learners make connections between religions, beliefs and the experiences that all humans share. RE develops clear, broad and deep thinking about religions and beliefs.

RE provokes pupils to **consider challenging questions** about possible meanings of life, beliefs issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human.

RE develops pupils' **knowledge and understanding** of Christianity, other principal religions, other religious traditions and other world views that offer answers to questions such as these.

RE offers opportunities to all pupils for **personal reflection** and spiritual and moral development.

RE enhances pupils, awareness and understanding of the positive and negative **influences of religion** on individuals, families, communities and cultures.

RE encourages pupils to explore **their own beliefs and questions** of meaning as they learn from different religions, beliefs, values and traditions.

RE challenges pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and **evaluate issues of truth**, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses.

RE encourages pupils to **develop their sense of identity** and belonging. It enables them to flourish individually within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society and global community.

RE has an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It enables pupils to **develop respect** for and sensitivity to others, RE promotes discernment and enables pupils to combat prejudice.

What must we teach? RE and the law

The statutory requirements for Religious Education in schools

The main statutory requirements relating to RE in schools and the Local Authority's responsibilities are in the Education Acts 1996 and 2002, the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, the Children Act 2004 and the Education and Inspections Act 2006. The Department for Education also publishes guidance in "Religious Education in English Schools: Non-Statutory Guidance 2010". The key points are:

- RE is a component of the National Curriculum and must be provided for all registered pupils on the school roll, from reception classes through to the sixth form. This does not include nursery schools, nursery classes or sixth form colleges but does include as far as practicable PRUs and special schools.
- Parents may withdraw their children from RE lessons and the school has a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Where the pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parents want the pupil to receive. This RE could be provided at the school in question, or by another school in the locality. If neither approach is practicable, the pupil may receive external RE teaching as long as the withdrawal does not significantly impact on the child's attendance. Schools should have a policy setting out their approach to provision and withdrawal.
- Teachers cannot be required to teach RE.
- At community, foundation and voluntary controlled schools without a religious character, RE must be taught in accordance with the Local Authority's Agreed Syllabus.
- Denominational voluntary aided schools with a religious character are not required to use the Agreed Syllabus, but must follow the requirements of their trust deed or the tenets of their denomination, where the trust deed does not specify requirements. However, the Agreed Syllabus must be taught where parents request it and the child cannot reasonably attend a school where the Agreed Syllabus is being taught.
- RE provided in compliance with the Agreed Syllabus must not be denominational in character but it is permissible to teach about denominational differences. It must however "reflect that the religious traditions of Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practises of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain."
- RE is not subject to nationally prescribed attainment targets, programmes of study and assessment arrangements, but is subject to inspection. However, non-statutory guidance is available.
- All academies are required, through their funding agreements, to teach RE to all pupils. For academies without a religious character, this will be the locally agreed syllabus. For faith academies, this will depend on the wishes of the sponsor.
- The Local Authority has a responsibility to maintain a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) to advise the Authority on matters connected with RE.
- In relation to community schools, foundation and voluntary schools without a religious character, the Authority, Governing Body and Headteacher have responsibilities to ensure that legal requirements are followed.

Note: The statutory requirements for RE in schools may change during the life of this syllabus and schools will need to confirm the current requirements.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development through RE

A distinctive contribution from Religious Education

The Agreed Syllabus for RE enables the teaching of RE to make a distinctive and significant contribution to these four aspects of pupils' learning. While schools provide for these aspects of personal development in many ways, and through many subjects of the curriculum, RE may often focus on spiritual and moral education within the curriculum, and makes a distinctive contribution to understanding cultural diversity through developing understanding of religions. These opportunities for personal development contribute to high standards and aspirations for each pupil.

Spiritual education enables pupils to increase their self awareness and to look at their human relationships, at the wider world and at their ideas about ultimate reality, (for some pupils a god with characteristics such as courage, hope, strength, insight and love).

Religious education provides opportunities to promote *spiritual* education/development through:

- discussing and reflecting on key questions of meaning and truth such as the origins of the universe, life after death, good and evil, beliefs about God and values such as justice, honesty and truth;
- learning about and reflecting on important concepts, experiences and beliefs that are at the heart of religious and other traditions and practices;
- considering how beliefs and concepts in religion may be expressed through the creative and expressive arts and related to the human and natural sciences, thereby contributing to personal and communal identity;
- considering how religions and other world views perceive the value of human beings, and their relationships with one another, with the natural world, and with belief about God;
- valuing relationships and developing a sense of belonging;
- developing their own views and ideas on religious and spiritual issues.

Moral education / development enables pupils to take an increasingly thoughtful view of what is right and wrong, to recognise the needs and interests of others as well as themselves and develop characteristics such as truthfulness, kindness, unselfishness and commitments to virtues such as integrity, justice and the will to do what is right, so that they can live in ways which respect the well-being and rights of each person.

Religious education provides opportunities to promote *moral* education/development through:

- exploring the values identified by schools and within the National Curriculum, particularly valuing diversity and engaging in issues of truth, justice and trust;
- exploring the influence of family, friends and media on moral choices and how society is influenced by beliefs, teachings, sacred texts and guidance from religious and other leaders;
- considering what is of ultimate value to pupils and believers through studying the key beliefs and teachings from religion and philosophy about values and ethical codes of practice;
- studying a range of ethical issues, including those that focus on justice, to promote racial and religious respect, community cohesion and personal integrity;
- considering the importance of rights and responsibilities and developing a sense of conscience.

Social education / development enables pupils to relate to others successfully through an understanding of the responsibilities and rights of being a member of various family, local, national and global communities. It enables them to develop social skills, qualities, attitudes and characteristics such as respectfulness, tolerance, a willingness to get involved, so that they can play a full and fulfilling part in their community and society as, for example, family members, citizens, learners and workers.

Religious education provides opportunities to promote *social* education/development through:

- considering how religious and other beliefs lead to particular actions and concerns in local, national and global society;
- investigating social issues from diverse perspectives of religion and belief, recognising the diversity of viewpoints within and between religions and beliefs as well as some common ground between religions and non-religious values;
- articulating pupils' own and others' ideas on a range of contemporary social issues, including environmental concerns, issues of equality and respect for all.

Cultural education / development enables pupils to develop their sense of their own place and identity in society, to value and participate creatively in their own culture and appreciate the cultures of others by developing their appreciation of, for example the arts, literature, sport, music, travel and other aspects of culture. Cultural education / development makes its contribution to human wellbeing through enabling participation in diverse varieties of cultural life for the enrichment of individuals and communities. Cultural education / development enables pupils to develop understanding, qualities and attitudes which lead to appreciation or participation in local, regional, national, European and global cultures.

Religious education provides opportunities to promote *cultural* education/development through:

- encountering people, literature, the creative and expressive arts and resources from differing cultures in increasing depth;
- considering the relationship between religion and cultures and how religions and beliefs contribute to cultural identity and practices for many people;
- promoting inter faith harmony and respect, making a positive contribution to a society where different religions and beliefs co-exist, promoting awareness of how interfaith cooperation can sometimes support the pursuit of the common good.
- combating prejudice and discrimination, contributing positively to community cohesion and reducing racism.

*What do North Yorkshire pupils say?
My favourite thing about RE is...*

“ The philosophical aspect of the subject. You get a chance to study the most important fundamental questions in the Universe. ”

Sam Clissold, Year 12

The Breadth of Religious Education

It is through teaching RE's aims and attainment targets that high standards in RE can be established. Pupils' experience of the subject is the focus for their exploration of human experience and beliefs. It is also important that pupils are taught in depth and detail about particular religions and beliefs through each of the key stages.

This Agreed Syllabus requires schools to contribute to enabling pupils in North Yorkshire to develop an overall understanding of the 6 principal religions in the UK. The balance between depth of understanding and the coverage of material in these religions is important, so the syllabus lays down the recommended religions to be taught to each age group. This is in line with the law, which states that Religious Education shall have regard to "the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain." There is an emphasis on the depth of study of Christianity and other religions and beliefs, rather than mere "coverage". If schools follow this recommendation then pupils will encounter the six principal religions in the UK in some depth by the time they are 14 years old.

This can be seen as a minimum entitlement to learning about religions, and some schools may plan the study of more religions than this minimum through the choice schools make about units of work. This may be especially appropriate where children from many religions are present in one class or school. This structure promotes continuity and progression between schools. Schools may plan some RE that goes beyond this – for example in response to topical events or local needs – but regard must be given to the importance of enabling pupils to study religions and beliefs in depth.

Additionally, schools may use material from other religious traditions and belief systems represented in the school, the local area, the region or the UK, such as Rastafari, the Baha'i Faith, Jehovah's Witnesses, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Brahma Kumaris or Humanists.

“ I did this to show that it doesn't matter what colour or religion you are. We can all be faithful, peaceful and show respect to each other. ”

Helen Edgeworth, Age 11, Thirsk School



Which religions and beliefs are to be studied?

The Agreed Syllabus requires religions to be studied in depth as follows:

Minimum entitlement		
4-5s	Developing a growing sense of the child's awareness of self, own community and their place within this.	<p>Non religious world views in RE: Many pupils come from families and communities that practice no religion. Many people reject supernatural explanations of human life. It is recommended that pupils study non-religious beliefs and ways of life both before the age of 14 and during 14-19 RE. These may include examples such as Humanism and the ideas of people who describe themselves as 'spiritual but not religious'.</p> <p>This is the minimum requirement. Many schools will wish to go further. Schools should consider the needs of their pupils in deciding whether to go beyond this minimum entitlement.</p>
5-7s	Two religions are to be studied. Christianity and at least one other religion (Islam is the recommended example). Religions and beliefs represented in the local area. Pupils may also learn from other religions and beliefs in thematic units.	
7-11s	Three religions are to be studied. Christianity and at least two other religions (Two from Hinduism, Judaism or Islam are recommended). Pupils may learn from other religions and beliefs in thematic units.	
11-14s	Four religions are to be studied. Christianity, Buddhism, Sikhism and Islam are recommended. (An additional study of Judaism and Hinduism may also be undertaken). Pupils may learn from other religions and beliefs in thematic units.	
14-16s	It is recommended that at least two religions, usually including Christianity, are studied. This will usually be through a recognised national RS qualification course such as GCSE full or short RS courses or CoEA RS, but could be through a school devised course. Pupils may also learn from other religions and beliefs in thematic units.	
16-19	Belief systems or life stances as appropriate. Students may also learn from other religions and beliefs in thematic units.	

Note: progression in learning through the primary school

It is good practice for the religion chosen for learning with 4-7s to be a continuing focus for learning with 7-11s, for reasons of progression.

Note: Good practice in 14 - 19 RE is plural

The 14-19 section of the syllabus gives more detail on different ways for schools to develop their RE / RS courses. Schools studying only Christianity for examination courses must consider carefully how to avoid narrow learning in RE.

Note: 16 - 19 RE for all

RE should be available for all students irrespective of which examination courses they choose.

SECTION 2: What?

Programmes of Study for RE

RE for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

What do pupils get out of RE in this age group?

RE sits very firmly within the areas of personal, social and emotional development and knowledge of the world. This framework enables children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others and to learn how to form positive and respectful relationships. They will begin to understand and value the differences of individuals and groups within their own immediate community. Children will have opportunity to develop their emerging moral and cultural awareness.

Breadth of study and Key areas of learning

Children should have the opportunity to:

- Reflect on the awe and wonder of the natural world around them.
- Ask questions that are philosophically challenging and to have them taken seriously.
- Reflect on the need to develop positive, respectful relationship with their peers and adults.
- Explore their own feelings and emotions and develop empathy for others.
- To have opportunity to talk about and reflect on events, times and places that are important to them, their peers and their community.
- Listen to and talk about stories from a number of different faiths.
- Develop a sense of belonging and with it an awareness of personal responsibility.

Across EYFS pupils will develop an understanding of:

Personal Social and Emotional Development

Managing feelings and behaviour: talk about how they and others show feelings, talk about their own and others' behaviour, and its consequences, and know that some behaviour is unacceptable. Work as part of a group or class, and understand and follow the rules. Adjust their behaviour to different situations, and take changes of routine in their stride.

Knowledge of the World

People and communities: talk about past and present events in their own lives and in the lives of family members. Know that other children don't always enjoy the same things, and are sensitive to this. Know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among families, communities and traditions.

The RE Programme of Study for ages 5-7

What do pupils get out of RE in this age group?

RE for 5-7 year olds can use play, curiosity and teamwork to explore what matters to children. Pupils will talk about beliefs about God and express their own ideas simply. They will encounter and respond to a range of stories, artefacts and other religious materials. They will begin to understand the importance and value of religion for believers. Pupils will begin to learn about some of the richness of Christianity and at least one other religion in the UK today. They will be able to use simple information about religion, recognising that ideas are communicated in a variety of ways.

Pupils will be able to reflect on their own feelings and experiences and develop a sense of belonging. They will ask relevant questions, showing that they are developing an enquiring approach to religion and life and a sense of wonder at the world. They will be able to talk about what is important to them, valuing themselves.

Breadth of Study

Two religions are to be studied.

Christianity and at least one other religion (Islam is the recommended example).

Pupils may learn from other religions and beliefs in addition to these in thematic units.

Schools may plan to study non-religious world views where appropriate.

Key Areas of Learning

The fields of enquiry should be addressed through the following themes, by helping children to think about questions to do with:

- **Story:** how and why are some stories special or sacred? What makes these stories important in religion?
- **Myself:** who I am? What makes me unique as a person in a family and community?
- **Belonging:** where do people belong? How do we belong? Why is belonging important?
- **Leaders and teachers:** what can we learn from figures who have an influence on others locally, nationally and globally in religion and beliefs?
- **Celebrations:** how and why are celebrations important in religion?
- **Symbols:** how and why do symbols express religious meaning?
- **Believing:** what do different people believe about God, humanity and the natural world?

Across the 5-7 age range, pupils will be enabled to:

Learn about religion and belief (AT1)	Learn from religion and belief (AT2)
<p>Knowledge, skills and understanding in finding out about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide range of religious stories from sacred writings: learners will talk about their meanings and respond sensitively to them. • Different celebrations and ways of worshipping in religion, noticing some similarities between them. • Signs of belonging to religions, and symbols with meaning for religious people, noticing this makes a difference in life. • Ways in which religious beliefs and ideas can be expressed creatively, e.g. in art, buildings, music and other forms. Children respond creatively themselves. • Children begin to use a range of religious words. 	<p>Engaging with, reflecting on and responding to questions about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Myself, and community, responding to examples of how religion makes a difference to individuals, families and communities. • Puzzling questions and beliefs, asking and responding imaginatively to puzzling questions and sharing their thoughts; • Values and commitments, engaging with questions about what matters most and thinking about some examples of religious and spiritual feelings, experiences and ideas, for example worship, wonder, praise, thankfulness, concern, joy and sadness.

Practical support for this learning

The syllabus support materials include 6 examples of planned units of learning, ready for the teacher to use and adapt, as follows:

1.1	4-5s	Who celebrates what and why?
1.2	4-5s	Questions that puzzle us
1.3	5-6s	Special stories for Christians and Muslims
1.4	5-6s	How do we show we care?
1.5	6-7s	Creation and thanksgiving
1.6	6-7s	Holy places: What can we learn from visiting a religious building?

These six unit plans are not a complete programme of study, but taught well, they might be half of what school will need to plan to implement the syllabus. In addition, a blank investigation planning grid for school use is available. SACRE welcomes offers from all schools using the syllabus to share their planning.

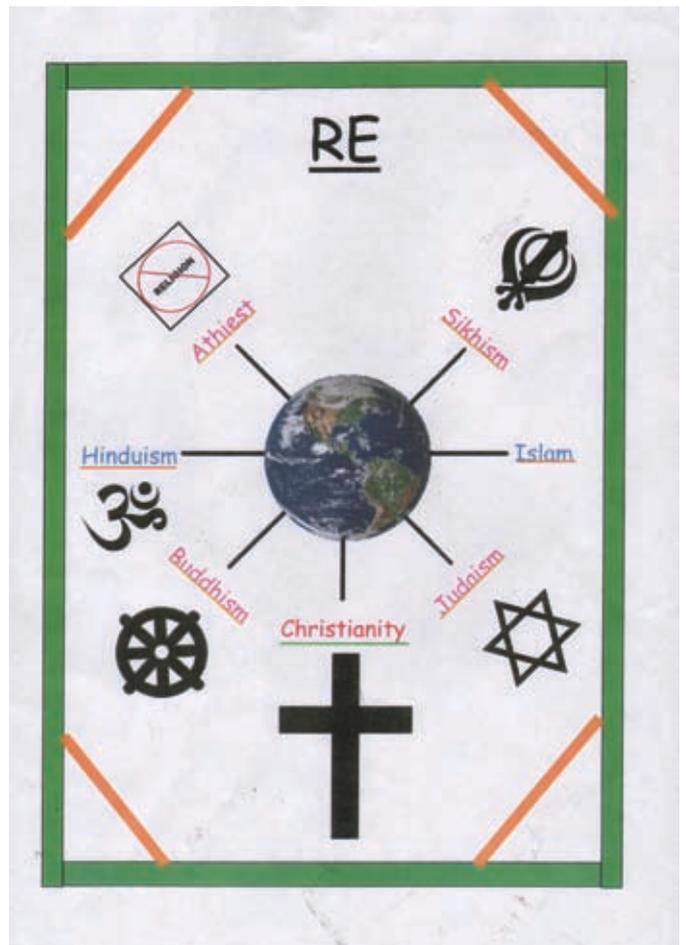
Achievement and Assessment

- RE planning must set appropriate and challenging expectations for pupils using the North Yorkshire 8 level scale, which describes appropriate achievement for most pupils at particular ages (see appendix 4).
- By the age of 7 most pupils are expected to attain at Level 2 (L2) on the scale and in North Yorkshire many should attain at level 3, in line with their performance in other subjects.
- A large majority of pupils will be working in the range L1-L2. The curriculum also needs to cater for some pupils whose abilities of self-expression and thinking are at L3. Similarly some children with special educational needs will be achieving with reference to the Early Learning Goals and to the P scales.
- In practice this means that teachers must plan work that enables pupils to identify and talk about religious materials (e.g. words, objects, festivals, stories, beliefs), moving on through the age range to be able to retell stories, respond sensitively to religious materials and suggest meanings in actions, symbols, words and stories.

*What do North Yorkshire pupils say?
My favourite thing about RE is...*

“ *When the whole class is in a discussion about a controversial topic or one of life's biggest questions.* **”**

Dominic Clark, Year 9



Ben Marsh, age 12, Scalby School

The RE Programme of Study for ages 7-11

What do pupils get out of RE in this age group?

RE for this age group can be a fascinating enquiry, a challenging series of discoveries. From the ages of 7 to 11 pupils will investigate and explore Christianity and at least two other religions, finding out about similarities and differences and learning to use key words and concepts. They will learn to recognise the impact of religion and belief locally, nationally and globally, connecting up different aspects of religion and life. They learn about sacred texts and other religious sources and consider their meanings. Recognising diversity in religion and belief, they will be able to think about issues of respect for all. They make connections between their learning and their own lives, considering big questions of identity, meaning and commitment for themselves.

Breadth of Study

Three religions are to be studied.

Christianity and at least two other religions (Two from Hinduism, Judaism or Islam are recommended).

In addition to these, pupils may learn from other religions and beliefs in thematic units.

Schools may plan to study non-religious world views where appropriate.

Key Areas of Learning

The fields of enquiry should be addressed through the following themes, by raising and addressing key questions:

- **Beliefs and questions:** How do the beliefs of religious and non-religious people about God, the world and others make a difference to their lives?
- **Teachings and authority:** What do sacred texts and other sources say about God, the world and human life?
- **Worship, pilgrimage and sacred places:** Where, how and why do different people worship, including at particular sites?
- **The journey of life and death:** Why are some occasions sacred to believers? What do people think about life after death?
- **Symbols and religious expression:** How can religious and spiritual ideas be expressed in different ways?
- **Inspirational people:** Who is an inspiring figure? What impact do inspiring people have on us and on the wider world?
- **Religion and the individual:** What is expected of a person in following a religion or belief?
- **Religion, family and community:** How do religious families and communities practise their faith? What contributions does this make to local life in North Yorkshire?
- **Beliefs in action in the world:** How do religions and beliefs respond to global issues of human rights, fairness, social justice and the importance of the environment?

Across the 7-11 age range, pupils will be enabled to:

Learn about religion and belief (AT1)	Learn from religion and belief (AT2)
<p>Knowledge skills and understanding in investigating:</p> <p>Beliefs, teachings and sources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils will investigate and describe key beliefs and teachings of the religions and beliefs they study; 	<p>Engaging with, reflecting on and responding to questions of:</p> <p>Identity, diversity and belonging</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils will reflect on questions about their sense of identity and their understanding of diversity in and between the religions and beliefs they study;
<p>Practices and lifestyles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils will explore and describe some ways religions and beliefs have an impact on life in families, communities and wider society; 	<p>Meaning, purpose and truth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils will express their own understanding of key beliefs, stories and leaders, and reflect on the sources of wisdom and inspiration in their own lives;
<p>Expressing meaning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils will find out about and consider different forms of religious and spiritual expression including music, architecture, sacred texts, festivals, worship and pilgrimages. 	<p>Values and commitments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils will explore and reflect on some ideas of right and wrong, good and evil, understanding diverse ideas and expressing ideas of their own thoughtfully.

Practical support for this learning

The syllabus support materials include 8 examples of planned units of learning, ready for the teacher to use and adapt, as follows:

2.1	For 7-9s	What makes Jesus an inspiration to some people? Who is inspiring for me?
2.2	For 7-9s	Does a beautiful world mean there is a wonderful God? Exploring the meaning of creation stories for Jews and Christians
2.3	For 7-9s	How and why do Hindus and Christians see life like a journey? Where does the journey of life lead?
2.4	For 7-9s	Why do people love their sacred places? What can we learn from visiting holy buildings?
2.5	For 9-11s	Christian Aid and Islamic Relief: Can they change the world?
2.6	For 9-11s	Why are there now over 50 mosques in Yorkshire?
2.7	For 9-11s	Values: What matters most to Christians, to Humanists and to me?
2.8	For 9-11s	What can make our community more tolerant and respectful?

These eight unit plans are not a complete programme of study, but taught well, they might be half of what school will need to plan to implement the syllabus. In addition, a blank investigation planning grid for school use is available. SACRE welcomes offers from all schools using the syllabus to share their planning.

Achievement and Assessment

- RE planning must set appropriate and challenging expectations for pupils using the North Yorkshire 8 level scale, which describes appropriate achievement for most pupils at particular ages (see appendix 4).
- By the age of 11 most pupils are expected to attain at Level 4 (L4) on the scale and in North Yorkshire many should attain at level 5, in line with their performance in other subjects.
- Whilst the vast majority of pupils will be working in the range L3-L5, there will be some pupils whose abilities of self-expression and thinking are at L6. Similarly some children with special educational needs will be achieving at L1 or L2, or with reference to the P scales.
- In practice this means that teachers must plan work that enables pupils to describe religion and belief, making links to their own lives, progressing to work that enables pupils to use religious vocabulary and concepts accurately to show their understanding of diverse religions and beliefs and to apply religious and spiritual ideas for themselves.

“ My design shows the symbols of the six main religions with hands outstretched to each other with a happy world at the centre. A perfect world would be where all the different people, whatever they believe, are connected by love and any emptiness or gaps between them would be filled with love and peace. (I used cross-stich to fill in the gaps in my design because each stitch is like a little kiss).

RE teaches us that with broad minds and open hearts we can all live together in peace and harmony, no matter what we believe. ”

Grace Chamberlain, age 11, Stillington Primary School



The RE Programme of Study for ages 11-14

What do pupils get out of RE in this age group?

RE for this age group should be a dynamic, argumentative and profound engagement with life's big questions.

Pupils will deepen and broaden their understanding of Christianity and at least three other principal religions in local, national and global contexts. In so doing, they use key concepts from religion and belief to explain literal and symbolic forms of expression, e.g. in religious ritual, action, ethics and the arts. They explain and respond to religious sources, showing their understanding of some ways in which religious teachings can be interpreted within faith communities. They explore some personal, theological and cultural reasons for similarities and differences in religious beliefs and values, both within and between religions. They make effective use of religious terminology in deploying the skills for reasoned argument in believing and making value judgments. Pupils investigate and explain viewpoints about religion and belief as they apply to relationships, rights and responsibilities, moral dilemmas and ultimate questions. They relate their learning to their own ideas and experiences. They interpret ideas and sources from religion and belief for themselves, developing their own responses to key questions of meaning, truth and values thoughtfully.

Breadth of Study

Four religions are to be studied.

Christianity and at least three other religions (Buddhism, Sikhism and one other are recommended).

In addition to these, pupils may learn from other religions and beliefs in thematic units.

Schools may plan to study non-religious world views where appropriate.

Key Areas of Learning

The fields of enquiry should be addressed through the following themes, by raising and addressing key questions:

- **Authority:** different sources of authority and how they inform believers' lives.
- **Beliefs and concepts:** the key ideas and questions of meaning in religions, including issues related to God, truth, the world, human life, and life after death.
- **Ethics and relationships:** questions and influences that inform ethical and moral choices, including forgiveness and issues of good and evil.
- **Expressing spirituality:** how and why human self understanding and experiences are expressed in a variety of forms.
- **Religion and science:** issues of truth, explanation, meaning and purpose
- **Rights and responsibilities:** what religions say about human rights and responsibilities, social justice and citizenship.
- **Global issues:** what religions say about issues such as health, wealth, war, animal rights and the environment.
- **Inter-faith dialogue:** a study of relationships, conflicts and collaboration within and between religions.

Across the 11-14 age range, pupils will be enabled to:

Learn about religion and belief (AT1)	Learn from religion and belief (AT2)
<p>Knowledge skills and understanding in investigating:</p> <p>Beliefs, teachings and sources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding, explaining and interpreting teachings, sources, authorities and ways of life in order to express reasoned views about religions and beliefs; and • understanding, explaining and interpreting beliefs, teachings and attitudes in relation to the human quest for identity, meaning and values. 	<p>Engaging with, reflecting on and responding to questions of:</p> <p>Identity, diversity and belonging</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding, explaining and interpreting varied viewpoints on issues connecting personal and communal identity; and • applying ideas and expressing insights into questions of identity, diversity and belonging in personal and communal contexts and in relation to community cohesion.
<p>Practices and lifestyles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding, explaining and interpreting the varied impacts of religions and beliefs on how people live their lives; and • applying ideas and expressing insights about the impact of practices from religions and beliefs on ways of life. 	<p>Meaning, purpose and truth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describing and expressing insights into ultimate questions that confront humanity; • applying ideas and expressing insights into questions of meaning and purpose in relation to religion and beliefs; and • explaining different ideas about what is true.
<p>Expressing meaning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding and expressing ideas and insights about the meanings of different forms of religious, spiritual, moral and cultural expression; and • understanding, explaining and interpreting ways in which religions and beliefs use literature, the arts, music, architecture and other forms of creative expression to respond to ultimate questions. 	<p>Values and commitments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding, explaining and interpreting moral values and how they can relate to beliefs and experience; and • expressing views and ideas about their own and others' values and commitments in order to make informed, rational and imaginative choices.

Practical support for this learning

The syllabus support materials include 5 examples of planned units of learning, ready for the teacher to use and adapt, as follows:

3.1.	11-14s	Does it make sense to believe in God? Christian and other views
3.2.	11-14s	Being British and being Sikh: How do Sikhs live out their faith?
3.3.	11-14s	Can anger and suffering be reduced? Buddhist ideas.
3.4.	11-14s	What is good and right? What is wrong and evil? Muslims, Christians, Atheists.
3.5.	11-14s	What will make our communities more respectful? Living in multi faith Britain.

These five unit plans are not a complete programme of study, but taught well, they might be half of what school will need to plan to implement the syllabus. In addition, a blank investigation planning grid for school use is available. SACRE welcomes offers from all schools using the syllabus to share their planning.

Achievement and Assessment

- RE planning must set appropriate and challenging expectations for pupils using the North Yorkshire 8 level scale, which describes appropriate achievement for most pupils at particular ages (see appendix 4).
- By the age of 14 most pupils are expected to attain at Level 6 (L6) on the scale and in North Yorkshire some should attain at level 7 or 8, in line with their performance in other subjects.
- Whilst most pupils will be working in the range L4-7, there will be some pupils whose abilities mean they work at L1-L3, or with reference to the P scales. All pupils are entitled to a curriculum which enables them to progress.
- In practice this means that teachers must plan work that enables pupils to show their understanding of diverse religions and beliefs and to apply religious and spiritual ideas for themselves, progressing to be able to explain, interpret and analyse religion and belief, while being increasingly able to use reasons and arguments to evaluate questions of identity, meaning and commitment both critically and personally.



Frances Davenport, age 11, Scalby School

What do North Yorkshire pupils say?
RE is important because...

“I believe it’s important to understand and try to accept different religions and views. It can help give you an open mind and give you skills to explore something in more depth.”

Zoe Reed, Year 12

The RE Programme of Study for ages 14-19

The legal requirements and curriculum time required for RE

Provision of RE is a legal requirement for all students on the school roll. 70 hours of tuition across key stage 4 is the normal requirement by which learners can achieve the standards of the GCSE short course in Religious Studies that is the recommended minimum benchmark for RE provision in North Yorkshire

The value of RE to students 14-19

Through these RE courses, students gain access to many valuable learning opportunities including enabling students to:

- flourish individually, within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society and in the global community;
- develop personalised learning skills in relation to religion and belief and the world of work and adult life; and
- develop attitudes of respect for all in a plural society.

Academic examinations and qualifications in RE are valuable for further studies, academic and graduate learning and careers from law and social work to education and communication.

Curriculum opportunities from RE for every 14-19 learner

During the 14-19 phase students should be offered the following opportunities that are integral to their learning in RE and enhance their engagement with the concepts, processes and content of the subject. The curriculum should provide opportunities for students to:

- discuss, explore and question concepts, images and practices;
- visit places of worship, inter-faith centres or other spiritual places, learning from observing worship, practice, rituals, dialogue and other activity as appropriate;

- discuss, reflect on and develop arguments about philosophical and ethical issues in relation to spirituality, religions and beliefs;
- reflect on the importance of engagement in community projects, dialogue or social action, reflecting on its importance for themselves and others, including religious communities;
- encounter and engage with people from different religious, cultural and philosophical groups, to explore a range of convictions on spiritual, religious and moral issues;
- evaluate concepts, practices and issues, paying attention to beliefs and experience, and using reasoned, balanced arguments, evidence and experiences in forming their views;
- use a range of forms of expression to communicate their ideas and responses, including exploring and recording how their thoughts, feelings and experiences have changed;
- access and evaluate the sources, images and sounds that are key to their study, using sacred texts, resources and ICT as appropriate; and
- explore the connections between RE and other subject areas.

*What do North Yorkshire pupils say?
In RE it's interesting when...*

“ We learn about different people's views through debates on a variety of interesting and challenging topics such as the soul or equality. ”

Jack Harrild, Year 10

RE in Key Stage 4 in North Yorkshire

Option 1

The requirements of the syllabus are met where pupils take a GCSE course in Religious Studies (or equivalent) from a national awarding body. Awarding bodies set papers on philosophical and ethical approaches to RE as well as on particular religions. All these are suitable.

Any pupil following one of the nationally accredited courses below is deemed to have met the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus:

- a) GCSE Religious Studies course – normally this will be based on the study of Christianity and at least one other major religion or belief system (the full course);
- b) GCSE (Short Course) in Religious Studies – normally this will be based on the study of Christianity and at least one other major religion or belief system (the short course);
- c) 'Entry Level' certificate in Religious Studies.

Currently (2012), such courses are available from all the national awarding bodies: AQA, OCR, Edexcel and WJEC. There is a wide range of options and combinations of religions and topics to be studied. Schools taking this option must teach RE using the specifications of a GCSE (full or short) RS course. The Agreed Syllabus does not, of course, require that students be entered for this examination.

Option 2

A school designed programme of RE that meets the requirements of the syllabus, but does not lead to accreditation at GCSE, will show through planning that the goals and concepts of the next two pages of the syllabus, as well as its overall aims, have been met.

The principle of plurality: Good RE for 5-14s is plural RE. The same principle applies to GCSE. Schools should select options which enable pupils to study Christianity and at least one other religion or belief system. It is good practice for students to learn about the religions and beliefs of their own community and from their own perspective. Where schools decide, for whatever reason, to take GCSE options where only Christianity is studied, they must consider carefully how to avoid narrow learning in RE.

*What do North Yorkshire pupils say?
My favourite thing about RE is...*

**“ Learning about all
the different religions and
cultures in the world, about
their different traditions and
about non-religious views.**

”

Cara Websdale, Year 10

16-19 RE for All

All schools and colleges with students aged 16-19 on roll are required to provide an RE entitlement for these students, irrespective of which examination courses students may choose. This core entitlement for all students is seen in this Agreed Syllabus as an enrichment of curriculum studies: it takes its place alongside key skills, health education, careers, critical thinking, sex education and citizenship studies, all of which the school or college will also provide for students in this age range. The allocation of curriculum time for RE should be clearly identifiable and should avoid tokenism.

At this stage, learning opportunities should be focused upon a range of religions and views of life appropriate to the students and the selected curriculum content, having regard to prior learning and the value of both depth and breadth in studying religions. Schools may plan their provision for the key stage including topics selected from those listed below, or designed by the school in line with all the general requirements of the syllabus.

There is considerable flexibility for schools in devising programmes of study for 16-19s, and the units of study can be delivered in various ways, including through core and enrichment programmes of study, general studies, examined courses, as day conferences or through integrated work in a number of subjects.

The Agreed Syllabus Conference wishes to draw attention to the SCAA / QCA publication 'Religious Education 16-19' (reference: RE/95/299, ISBN: 1 85838 074 X) as a source of guidance for schools.

A copy of this booklet is included on the Agreed Syllabus section in the nyASSIST Humanities Room on Fronter.



Stephanie Jackson, aged 12, Scalby School

Key concepts for 14-19 RE for all

Across the 14 -19 age range, pupils will be enabled to:

Learn about religion and belief (AT1)

- **Investigate and interpret** significant issues in the light of their own identities, experiences and commitments.
- **Present coherent, detailed arguments** about beliefs, ethics, values and issues, with independence and critical awareness of their methods of study.
- **Use and develop specialist vocabulary** and critical arguments, with awareness of their power, limitations and ambiguity.
- Use and **evaluate** the rich, varied forms of creative expression in religious life.

Learn from religion and belief (AT2)

- **Reflect critically** on their opinions in the light of their learning about religions, beliefs and questions.
- Develop their independent **values and attitudes** on moral and spiritual issues related to their autonomy, identities, rights and responsibilities.
- **Evaluate** issues, beliefs, commitments and the influence of religion, including philosophical, spiritual and ethical perspectives.
- Use **skills of critical enquiry**, creative problem-solving and communication through a variety of media to respond to issues of identity, meaning and values in a wide range of contexts.

The key concepts

Beliefs, teachings and sources

Analysing teachings, sources, authorities and ways of life in order to understand religions and beliefs in historical and cultural context.

Understanding and analysing beliefs, teachings and attitudes in relation to the human quest for identity, meaning and values.

Identity, diversity and belonging

Interpreting and analysing diverse perspectives on issues connecting personal and communal identity.

Evaluating and analysing questions of identity, diversity and belonging in personal and communal contexts and in relation to community cohesion.

Practices and lifestyles

Explaining and evaluating the varied impacts of religions and beliefs on how people live their lives.

Analysing the ways in which the impact of religions and beliefs can vary according to context.

Meaning, purpose and truth

Analysing and synthesising insights on ultimate questions that confront humanity.

Expressing personal and critical evaluations of questions of meaning, purpose and truth in relation to religion and beliefs.

Expressing meaning

Interpreting and evaluating the meanings of different forms of religious, spiritual, moral and cultural expression.

Interpreting and synthesising many different sources and forms of religious, spiritual, moral and cultural expression.

Values and commitments

Synthesising evidence and arguments about ethics and morality in relation to beliefs, spirituality and experience.

Evaluating personally and critically their own and others' values and commitments in order to make coherent and rational choices.

SECTION 3: How?

Teaching and learning in RE RE in the EYFS

Develop an awareness of religions and beliefs and building up investigative, reasoning and evaluation skills, by:

Giving children time to talk and think.

Modelling being a thinker, showing that you don't always know, are curious and sometimes puzzled, and can think and find out.

*Encouraging open-ended thinking by not settling on the first ideas:
What else is possible?*

Valuing questions, talk, and many possible responses, without rushing toward answers too quickly.

Sustained shared thinking helps children to explore ideas and make links. Following children's lead in conversation, and thinking about things together.

Always respecting children's efforts and ideas, so they feel safe to take a risk with a new idea.

Using mind-maps to represent thinking together.

Exposing children to stories and RE stimulus.

Play is a key opportunity for children to think creatively and flexibly, solve problems and link ideas. Establish the enabling conditions for rich play: space, time, flexible resources, choice, control, warm and supportive relationships.

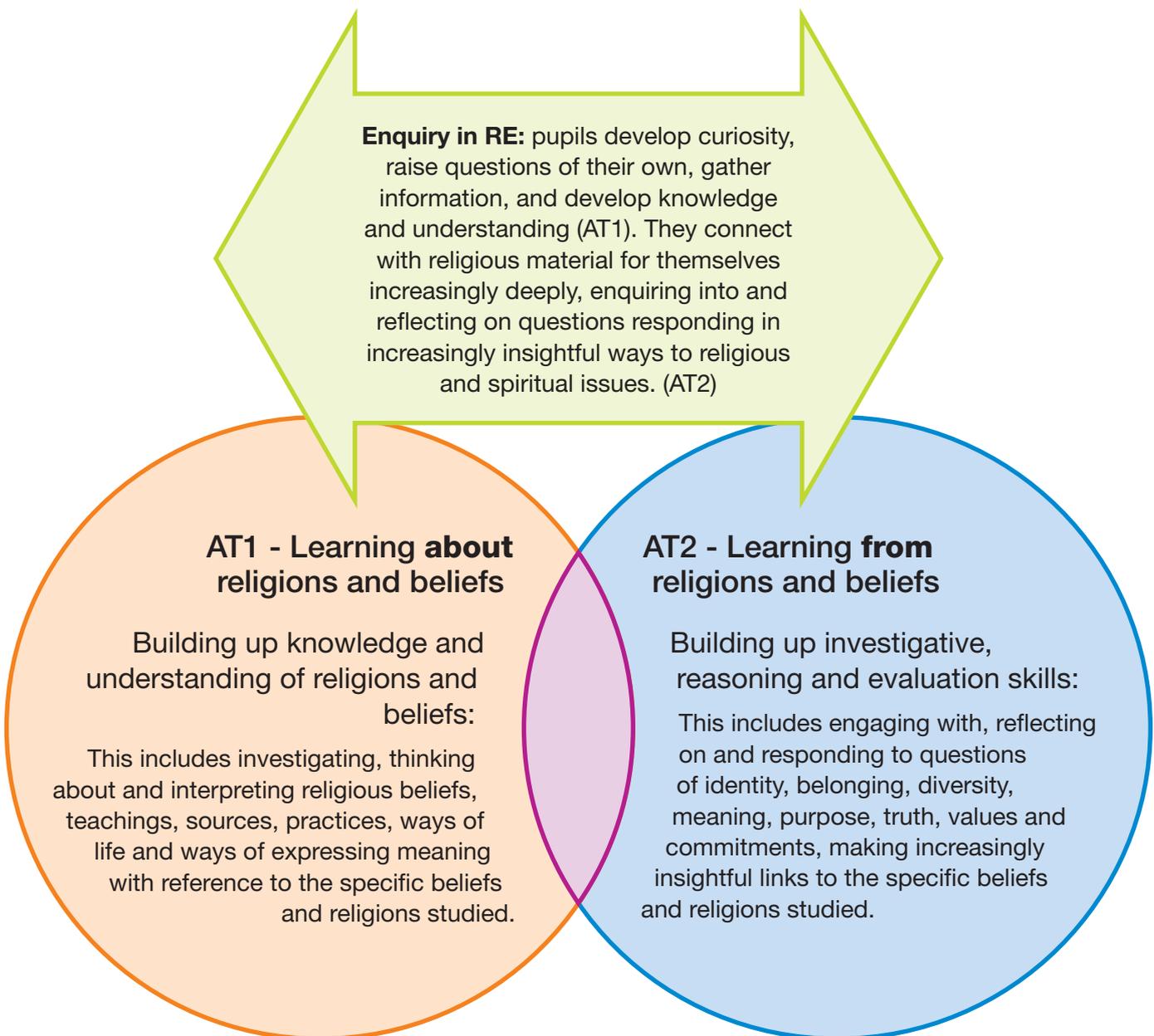
Playing with children. Encourage them to explore, and show your own interest in discovering new things.

*In planning activities, ask yourself: **Is this an opportunity for children to find their own ways to represent and develop their own ideas?** Avoid children just reproducing someone else's ideas.*

RE Age 5-14: Two Attainment Targets:

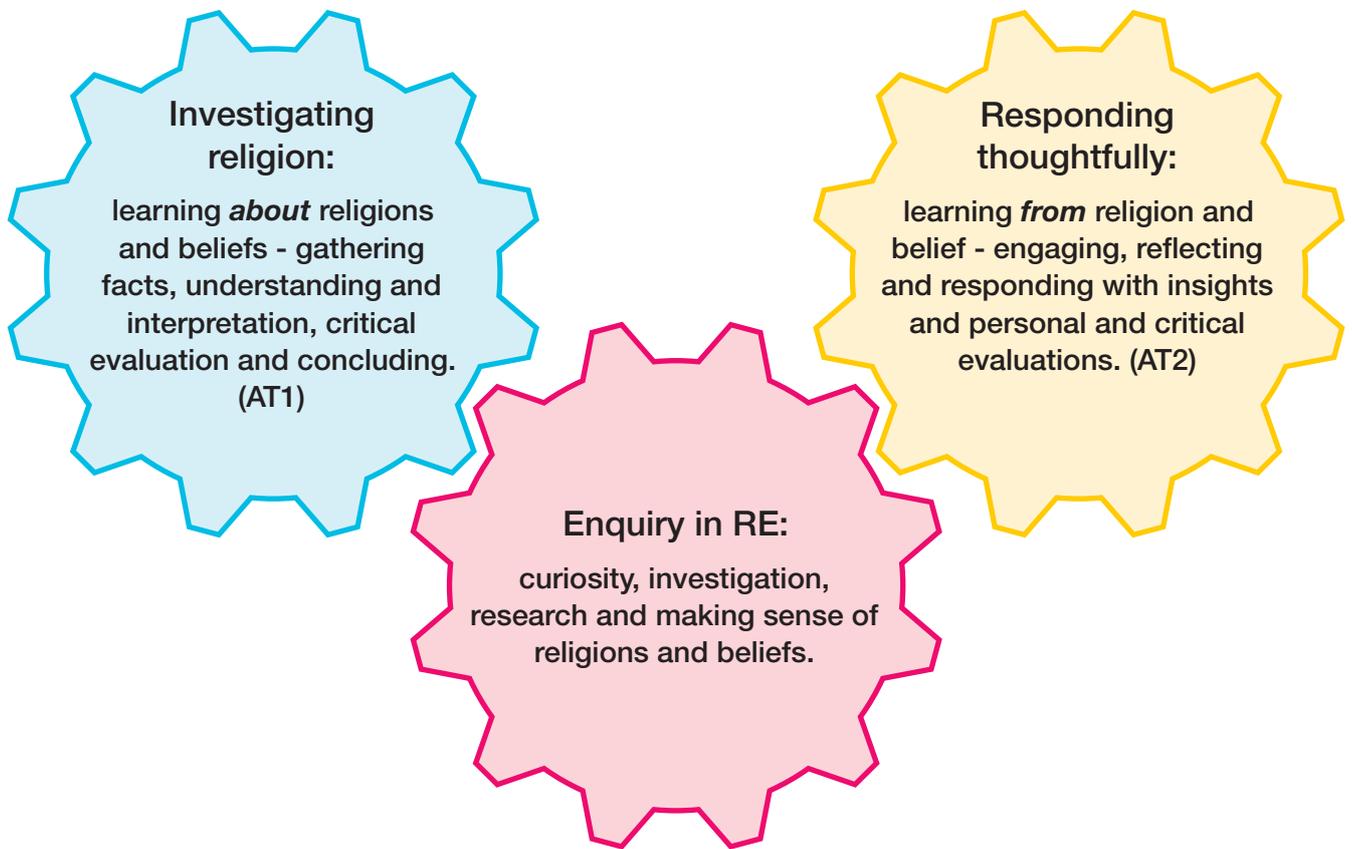
- Learning about religion and belief.
- Learning from religion and belief.

The two attainment targets are sometimes distinct in planning, but often interwoven in good teaching and learning. Good RE planning makes opportunities for both attainment targets to be available to all pupils in a 50/50 balance.



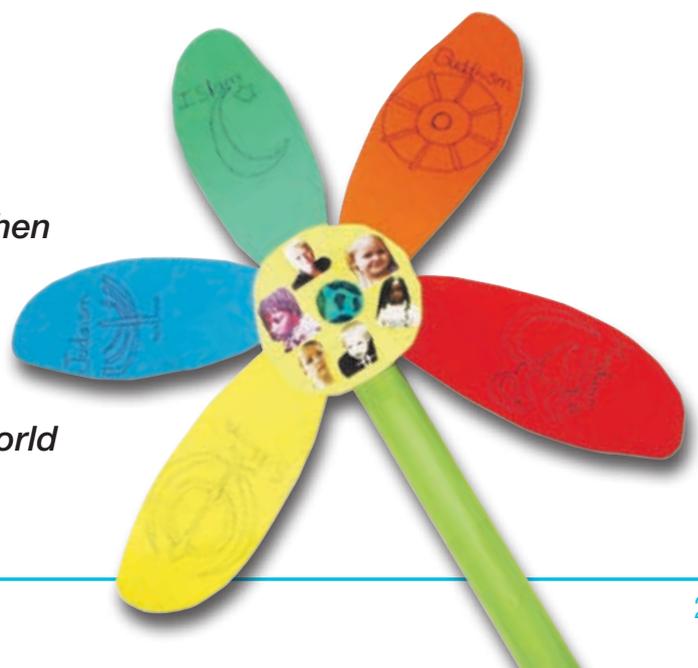
A metaphor for learning in RE: Three cogs each driven by the others.

This diagram shows the interconnected nature of enquiry processes with the two attainment targets of RE.



“ I chose to make a flower because when people with all different beliefs grow together you get something beautiful and strong. I put different faces at the centre to show that everyone is as important as each other in making the world strong and beautiful. **”**

Lucy Tidy, Age 8, Stillington Primary School



Assessment Overview: Assessment for learning in RE

The two Attainment Targets for RE set out the knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils of different abilities and maturities are expected to have by the end of the key stage. The Attainment Targets consist of 8 Level Descriptors of increasing difficulty. Each Level Description describes the types and range of performance that pupils working at that level should characteristically demonstrate.

The key indicators of attainment in RE are contained in three strands for Attainment Target 1 (Learning about religion and beliefs, in plain text) and three strands for Attainment Target 2 (Learning from religion and beliefs, in italic text). They are:

Attainment Target 1: Learning about religion and beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs, teachings and sources; • knowledge and understanding of religious practices and lifestyles; • knowledge and understanding of ways of expressing meaning.
Attainment Target 2: Learning from religion and beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • skills of asking and responding to questions of identity, diversity and belonging; • skills of asking and responding to questions of meaning, purpose and truth; • skills of asking and responding to questions of values and commitment.

The Level Descriptors provide the basis to make judgements about pupils' performance at the end of key stages 1, 2 and 3. At key stage 4, national qualifications are the main means of assessing attainment in RE.

Range of levels within which the great majority of pupils are expected to work		Expected attainment for the majority of pupils at the end of the key stage	
Ages 5-7	1-3	At age 7	2
Ages 7-11	2-5	At age 11	4
Ages 11-14	3-7	At age 14	6

The Level Descriptors provide the basis to make judgements about pupils' performance at the end of key stages 1, 2 and 3. At key stage 4, national qualifications are the main means of assessing attainment in RE.

Expectations in RE

The North Yorkshire ladder of key RE skills

	AT1 Learning about religion	AT2 Learning from religion
8	Analyse and contextualise	Synthesise and justify different views
7	Show coherent understanding, give coherent accounts, use varied methods	Evaluate personally and critically
6	Interpret (sources, evidence, ideas, arguments)	Express insights (using religious evidence)
5	Explain why, explain similarity and difference	Express their own views giving reasons
4	Show understanding (using correct vocabulary)	Apply ideas
3	Describe	Make links (to their own lives and experience)
2	Retell stories	Respond sensitively
1	Name, recognise	Talk about

This 'ladder' is the key way for teachers to begin interpreting the scale, and to begin sharing its demands with students. One core skill from each attainment target is highlighted, usually summed up in just one word. These skills are carefully chosen to exhibit the progression that the scale envisages. They function as simple shorthand for each of the levels, highlighting the key ability that this level seeks to develop.

Teachers will find this ladder helpful for themselves and for classroom display, as a way of sharing what progress in RE means and looks like with learners.

Organising RE: Curriculum Time for RE in North Yorkshire

In order to deliver the aims and expected standards of the syllabus, the Agreed Syllabus Conference strongly recommends a minimum allocation of curriculum time for RE based upon the law and DfE guidance: a minimum 5% of curriculum time is required for teaching RE. Schools should make plans to give this curriculum time to the subject as the syllabus is implemented.

This means in practice that schools are expected to allocate:

5-7s: 36 hours per year (e.g. 50 minutes a week, or an RE week each term)

7-11s: 45 hours per year (e.g. an hour a week, a series of RE days)

11-14s: 45 hours per year (e.g. an hour a week, RE-centred Humanities lessons taught for 4 hours a week for one term of the year)

14-16s: 5% of curriculum time, or 70 hours across the key stage (e.g. an hour a week for five terms)

16-19s: Allocation of time for RE for all should be clearly identifiable.

This means that RE can be delivered in approximately an hour a week.

Notes

- RE is legally required for all pupils. RE is a core subject of the curriculum for all pupils. The requirements of this Agreed Syllabus are not subject to the flexibility of the Foundation Subjects.
- RE is different from collective worship. Curriculum time for Religious Education is distinct from the time schools may spend on collective worship or school assembly. 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 the regular programme of timetabled lessons (see additional ideas on the next page).
- RE should be taught in clearly identifiable time. There is a common link between RE and such subjects as literacy, citizenship or PSHE, but 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.
- 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 this Agreed Syllabus to provide coherence and progression in RE learning. Too little time leads to low standards: Any school in which head teachers and governors do not plan to allocate sufficient curriculum time for RE is unlikely to be able to enable pupils to achieve the standards set out in this syllabus.

Flexible models of delivery and high standards in RE

Religious education must be planned for high standards. There are different ways that schools can do this. All pupils, 4-19, in North Yorkshire are entitled to good learning in RE, so schools must plan sufficient time for the subject to be well taught. Subject leaders for RE, senior staff, head teachers and governors will all take an interest in ensuring provision enables the best possible standards. This can be done in a variety of ways:

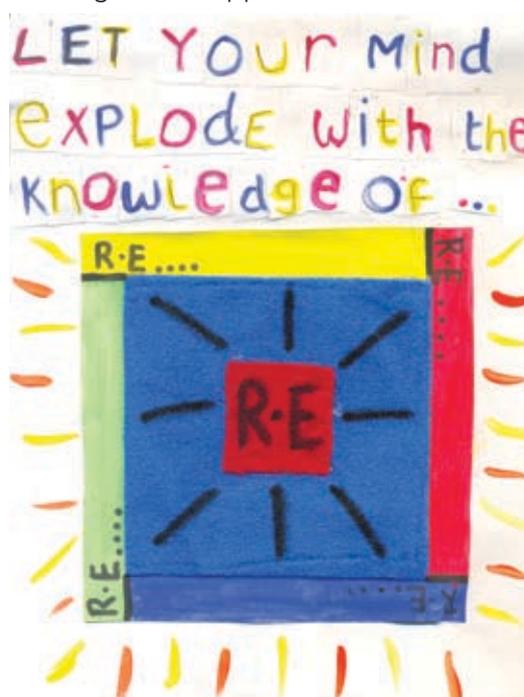
Whilst there may be occasions where there are planned activities for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, these should always start with the experiences and events which relate to the children and their immediate families. Other opportunities to develop children spiritually and morally in order to strengthen their understanding of culture would be planned and delivered through ongoing high quality provision. Children's own experiences and questions could be starting points.

Many schools use **one or two weekly lessons of RE** as the standard way of running the curriculum plan. RE then becomes a regular curriculum focus. The progress they make can be steady and continuous and teachers 'know where they are'. The main disadvantage is that pupils' weekly experience of RE can be too spread out for the deeper learning that the subject requires to flourish.

- Some schools use a **themed curriculum approach to RE**. A series of lessons in the humanities are themed for RE, e.g. for half a term, and pupils spend five hours a week or more doing RE and relating study to history or geography. In the next half term, the focus may be more on one of the other subjects. The main advantages of this are that pupils get a deeper and more continuous experience of RE. A disadvantage is that some schools use arbitrary themes or fail to plan RE into the programme at sufficient depth. Specialist teachers' involvement or a sharp focus on planned RE outcomes in planning is crucial. Guidance is available on the North Yorkshire website in the Fronter nyASSIST Humanities Room

- Some schools use an **'RE Week'** or an **'RE Day'** to focus learning, then follow up the 'big experience' with linked lessons over several weeks. Such 'big events' planning is demanding of teachers, but can for example help the whole school to focus and develop the subject. A day is about 5 hours, so is not, of course, a substitute for a term's work. The key to success is clarity about the RE learning that is planned. A guide to this kind of opportunity, with some practical ideas and outlines, is included on the Agreed Syllabus section in the Fronter nyASSIST Humanities Room.
- **Creative curriculum planning** can present both opportunities and challenges for RE: Why do inspectors sometimes find RE is least well covered in an integrated programme of learning? Do some themes enable RE effectively, but do some themes exclude RE? Schools must consider the learning objectives of the syllabus in deciding whether RE learning is well served by 'creative curriculum planning'.

In deciding the ways in which the Agreed Syllabus will be implemented, schools should ensure that the full range of RE opportunities is offered to all pupils.



Maisie Pickersgill, age 10, South Otterington Church of England primary School

Inclusion in RE

Religious Education makes a significant contribution to educational inclusion. Effective RE will ensure that all pupils will experience RE that affirms their own faith and family background. They will have access to appropriate, challenging experiences which enable them to learn about and learn from religions and beliefs inclusively.



Religious Education makes some unique contributions to inclusion work, especially with regard to the issues of religious prejudice and in challenging the ways systems of religion and belief sometimes marginalize non-members. There should be a particularly significant in RE's focus on promoting respect for all.

Community Cohesion: What does RE offer to pupils?

This Agreed Syllabus provides many opportunities for RE teaching and learning to challenge stereotypical views and to appreciate difference positively.

Government guidance advises that “every school is responsible for educating children and young people who will live and work in a country which is diverse in terms of cultures, religions or beliefs”. A recurring theme of government guidance on Religious Education is to “develop a positive attitude towards other people, respecting their right to hold different beliefs from their own, and towards living in a world of diverse religions.” RE guidance also requires schools to enable pupils to examine the consequences of anti-social behaviour such as racism and to develop strategies for dealing with it. Equally, Ofsted also points to the major contribution that RE makes to “valuing diversity, promoting multicultural understanding and respect.”

Promoting community cohesion aims to contribute to reducing the corrosive effects of intolerance. It is too simplistic to assume that merely by teaching about the major world religions, RE as a curriculum area will automatically contribute to community cohesion; there is a risk of reinforcing stereotypes in this subject area e.g. ‘Muslims are from Pakistan’ or ‘Christians are white’. It is valuable to note that, for example, Christians, Jews and Muslims all give great significance to Jesus within their religious tradition, holding some aspects in common and diverging on other fundamental points. As well as learning about the historical and current relationship between cultures, pupils should study the way in which one religion has influenced the development of another.

RE is an ideal vehicle for building links with local faith communities in the local area of the school. Pupils need opportunities to meet people of different faiths and cultures to develop a respect for those who believe, think and practice differently, without feeling that their own identity or views are threatened. In fact, pupils can deepen and clarify their sense of identity through their encounter with the ‘other’. It is important to set ground rules for discussion when religious differences are explored, in order

to create a safe and positive environment. This is particularly relevant where there may be media misrepresentations and commonly held negative stereotypes e.g. Islamophobia.

In terms of community cohesion in North Yorkshire, it is more meaningful to pupils if the religions taught include those of their own families and communities, including smaller faith groups in order to accord equal value and respect. Similarly, children should learn that non-religious perspectives on life are also valid and widespread. Large numbers of our pupils come from families where no religion is practised and they must not be made to feel that their lives or families are less worthy as a result.

Census details about religion in North Yorkshire and the region are available in appendix 2.



Rebecca Bolt, age 9, South Otterington Primary School

Available Guidance and Supporting Materials

Guidance to support high quality Religious Education in North Yorkshire is available from the Fronter nyASSIST Humanities Room (www.fronter.com/northyorks).

In particular, medium term planning units which meet the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus are set out there. Additional resources will be developed during the life of the syllabus.

The guidance and the contents of the units are non-statutory. It is the responsibility of individual schools to design schemes of learning which meet the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus.

In the Fronter nyASSIST Humanities Room, teachers will find:

- Units of learning (see Appendix 3)
- A blank planning template
- Guidance documents:
 - A: Good learning in RE: guidance for teachers.
 - B: Beginners guides to the religions and beliefs recommended for learning
 - C: Glossary of terms
 - D: A SACRE tool for using the 8 level scale of expectation in RE.
 - E: RE and assessment: six sample tasks.

Further information is available from Rebecca Mason, EDA Humanities

Email: rebecca.mason@northyorks.gov.uk

Telephone: **(01609) 798554**

Note: This information was correct at time of publication, but may change during the lifetime of the syllabus.

Appendix 1: Acknowledgements

Membership of the Agreed Syllabus Conference

Committee A: Other Beliefs

Committee B: Church of England

Committee C: Teachers in North Yorkshire

Committee D: Local Authority elected members

Committee	Name	Representing
A	Christina Taylor	Buddhism
A	Howard Quinn	Buddhism
A	Barbara Belsham	Methodist Church
A	Nasr Moussa Emam	Islam
A	John Adams	Humanism
A	Brian Quinn	Humanism
A	Gill Sellars	Baptist Church
A	Roop Singh	Sikhism
A	Neville Packter	Judaism
B	Mollie Haigh	Church of England
B	Francis Loftus	Church of England
B	Olivia Seymour	Church of England
C	Liz Bows	Primary teacher
C	Rachel Oates	Primary Teacher
C	Gillian Wood	Headteacher Primary
C	Fiona Beetles	Headteacher Primary
C	Sue Grey	AST/teacher primary
C	Amanda Head	AST/teacher secondary
C	Laura Hurt	Secondary teacher
C	Margaret Gibson	AST/teacher secondary
C	Gill Mulholland	Secondary teacher
C	Kim Nicholson	Secondary teacher
	Phil Bennington	LA : Quality and Improvement Service
	Rebecca Mason	LA : Quality and Improvement Service
	Georgia Miller	LA : Quality and Improvement Service
	Lat Blaylock	Consultant, RE Today Services
	Sixth form students from Richmond School (2)	Zoe Reed Max Dalton

This syllabus was formally agreed by the meeting of North Yorkshire SACRE on 19th July 2012, when all four committees voted to adopt the syllabus.

This syllabus can be obtained from <http://cyps.northyorks.gov.uk>

Appendix 2: Religion in North Yorkshire and the Region

Census figures from 2011

It is important that pupils are aware of the diverse religious beliefs of people in North Yorkshire and the wider population. Census figures are one source for this kind of enquiry. The tables below provide some basic information, but much more and more detail is available from the website: www.statistics.gov.uk. Secondary pupils can use this website for themselves, with some guidance.

Religion in North Yorkshire, the region and the UK (rounded to hundreds or thousands)

Religion / Belief	North Yorkshire	Yorkshire and Humberside	England and Wales
Christianity	415 200	3 144 000	33 243 000
Islam	2 146	326 000	2 706 000
Hinduism	1 181	24 000	816 000
Sikhism	192	22 200	423 000
Judaism	563	9 900	263 000
Buddhism	1609	14 300	247 000
Other religious groups	1889	16 500	240 000
No religion	133 000	1 366 000	14 097 000
Unstated in Census	42 500	360 000	4 038 000

One excellent way in to the figures for older pupils is to run a guessing game. What percentage of the people in the UK belong to each of these groups? What about Yorkshire and Humberside?

Note that while some populations may be numbers in hundreds or the low thousands in our immediate area, we are educating pupils to live in a region, nation and world – not merely in a village.

Since 2001, the biggest change has been a 10% increase in the number of non religious people in the UK and a 12% fall in the number identifying themselves as Christians. But Christianity is still selected by 59% of the population as their chosen description of religious identity.

Appendix 3: Units of learning available

Planned investigations available free to North Yorkshire schools in the Service Level Agreement. (Available on Fronter in the nyASSIST Humanities Room). Available for purchase by other schools.

1.1	4-5s	Who celebrates what and why?
1.2	4-5s	Questions that puzzle us
1.3	5-6s	Special stories for Christians and Muslims
1.4	5-6s	How do we show we care?
1.5	6-7s	Creation and thanksgiving
1.6	6-7s	Holy places: What can we learn from visiting a religious building?
2.1	7-9s	What makes Jesus an inspiration to some people? Who is inspiring for me?
2.2	7-9s	Does a beautiful world mean there is a wonderful God? Exploring the meanings of creation stories for Jews and Christians
2.3	7-9s	How and why do Hindus and Christians see life like a journey? Where does the journey of life lead?
2.4	7-9s	Why do people love their sacred places? What can we learn from visiting holy buildings?
2.5	9-11s	Christian Aid and Islamic Relief: Can they change the world?
2.6	9-11s	Why are there now over 50 mosques in Yorkshire?
2.7	9-11s	Values: What matters most to Christians, to Humanists and to me?
2.8	9-11s	What can make our community more tolerant and respectful?
3.1	11-14s	Does it make sense to believe in God? Christian and other views
3.2	11-14s	Being British and being Sikh: How do Sikhs live out their faith?
3.3	11-14s	Can anger and suffering be reduced? Buddhist ideas.
3.4	11-14s	What is good and right? What is wrong and evil? Muslims, Christians, Atheists
3.5	11-14s	What will make our communities more respectful? Living in multi faith Britain

Contact us

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