



# Exploring beliefs and celebrating diversity



SUTTON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AGREED SYLLABUS 2026





This new Sutton Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education is a much awaited document. Many RE teachers and Head Teachers in Sutton have been very interested to see how RE is developing to meet our changing world. It sets the goal of teaching pupils about different religions and worldviews so they can understand a variety of spiritual and moral values in their lives. This is also true for those who do not practice any religion.

This syllabus aims, by fostering knowledge and empathy, to support young people in school whatever their spiritual or philosophical background. In the London Borough of Sutton all pupils in our schools are valued and respected and we want to recognise the contribution of all communities. Such excellent quality RE enables them to think in more depth about their own perspective and of those around them.

The traditions and worldviews of different religions and cultures, when brought to school, give the whole school community, (pupils, staff, governors and parents), the ability to learn and grow in understanding each other. This was previously referred to as community cohesion and is vital to this educational programme. This quality of understanding is particularly important and needs fostering, as witnessed across our world in all types of intolerance and some streams of religious thought. In fulfilling this, RE plays a key element for all schools in Sutton, to promote a balance of spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils through the curriculum.

This new Sutton syllabus provides a secure pedagogical structural for the teaching of the major world religions: Christianity, Buddhism, Hindu Dharma, Islam, Judaism and Sikhi. It recognises the historical contribution of Christianity to the history of Britain and the legal requirement for it to be included at every key stage. It further recognises the vital contribution of other religions and worldviews practised by people who live in our borough, such as Humanism. This syllabus gives detailed proposal for the study of major world religions and allows space for inclusion of other religions and world views, particularly those which might be followed by members in our school communities. This syllabus is an excellent resource that will be enabled and empowered with continued support and training.

This syllabus has been overseen and agreed by the Sutton Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) on Religious Education and Sutton SACRE, which comprises of representatives from different religions and non- religious groups in the borough, teachers and LA representatives. I thank them for this sterling work. I would also like to thank Penny Smith-Orr, our previous RE Adviser and colleague on SACRE until last year, for her initial encouragement and guidance in setting up this process and our new RE Adviser and SACRE colleague, Claire Ramalli, who arrived newly appointed the last academic year and has led us so ably and knowledgeably.

*Veronica Stone*

Chair, Sutton SACRE.





It is with great pleasure that I introduce the new Sutton Locally Agreed Syllabus 2026 'Exploring Beliefs, Celebrating Diversity' for Religious Education. At its heart, this syllabus reflects our shared commitment to building a cohesive community, one in which everyone is heard and participates.

This agreed syllabus has been created to build upon the existing good work of many Sutton schools that I know already deliver excellent Religious Education.

It has been designed to support all schools in preparing students for life in a global world and aims to open minds so that the young people of Sutton attain a greater awareness of the world and the opportunities and challenges that they may face.

Importantly, the syllabus sets out the important role that Religious Education and Worldviews has in building sound knowledge, understanding and celebrating the lifestyles, values and beliefs of others. It encourages teaching that listens, respects, and responds to the diverse perspectives of all.

This syllabus has been developed in partnership with Sutton SACRE members, including teachers, community and faith leaders, and local authority representatives.

I would like to thank those colleagues that gave their time in the development of the syllabus which I am confident will be of great value to the schools, pupils, and their parents and carers that will benefit from it.

*Kieran Holliday*

Director, Education, Integrated Support and Safer Communities  
London Borough of Sutton





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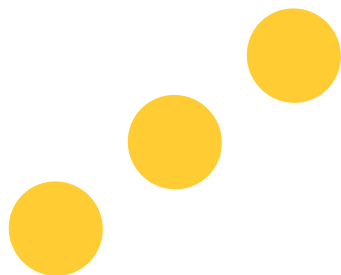
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## SECTION 1

# What is an agreed syllabus?

### A brief historical comment

- 1.1** During the 18th and 19th centuries, a system of schooling for the population as a whole was gradually created in England and Wales. Christian bodies set up and ran many schools; education reflected society at this time when most people identified in some way with the Christian religion. Christian belief and practice - including daily worship and Bible reading - featured in the everyday life of schools.
- 1.2** At the beginning of the 20th century, some education authorities decided to seek agreement amongst the various Christian groups about what material should be covered in 'religious instruction' (as it was usually called then). This was the birth of the 'Agreed Syllabus'.
- 1.3** The 1944 Education Act required that 'religious instruction' should form part of the curriculum, and that each school day should begin with an act of collective worship. In making these requirements, the legislators were simply confirming what was already common practice in schools. This Act, however, also required each local education authority (LEA) to draw up an agreed syllabus for religious education (RE).
- 1.4** Since 1944, there have been significant changes in both the format and content of agreed syllabuses. These have been due to, for example:
- an evolving understanding of the nature and purpose of RE,
  - shifts in general educational thought and strategies for teaching,
  - changes in the social, ethnic and religious make-up of local and national communities.

### Agreed syllabuses today

- 1.5** An agreed syllabus for RE/religion and worldviews sets out what all schools in a local authority (LA) - with the exception of those which are voluntary aided – should include in their RE/religion and worldviews programme. An agreed syllabus will also contain statements about the role of RE/religion and worldviews within the curriculum.
- 1.6** The text of an agreed syllabus is 'agreed' by an 'agreed syllabus conference' which includes representatives of the various educational, religious, worldviews and political groupings found in its local authority. For the membership of the agreed syllabus conference that agreed this document, see appendix E. This agreed syllabus has been validated by Sutton as a Local Authority to be followed in all its schools, and it is hoped that it will be adopted by Sutton academies and free schools.
- 1.7** The 1988 Education Reform Act made it a requirement that any new agreed syllabus published after that date should 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'. This requirement was confirmed by the Education Acts of 1996 and 1998. Although RE is a statutory subject, it is not part of the national curriculum.
- 1.8** These Acts also made it a requirement that:
- an agreed syllabus should be reviewed within five years of its publication,



- every LA should set up a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) in order to keep a watching brief on RE and collective worship in its LA. This responsibility includes looking at how schools are implementing the local agreed syllabus and the support that the LA provides in enabling them to do this.

**1.9** 'Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based, and which:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils
- prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of later life.

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

Although there is not a national curriculum for RE, all maintained, free and academy schools must follow the National Curriculum requirements to teach a broad and balanced curriculum, which includes RE. All publicly funded schools therefore have a statutory duty to teach RE. Academies and free schools are contractually required through the terms of their funding agreement to make provision for the teaching of RE.

The local and the national picture

**1.10** In 2010 non-statutory guidance was published by the DfE on RE, and the Religious Education Council (REC) has published 'A curriculum framework for RE' in 2013. In 2018 the REC published the Commission on Religious Education (CoRE), setting out a national entitlement statement for government and SACREs to take into account in writing a syllabus for RE/religion and worldviews. All these documents have been considered in revising this Sutton agreed syllabus.

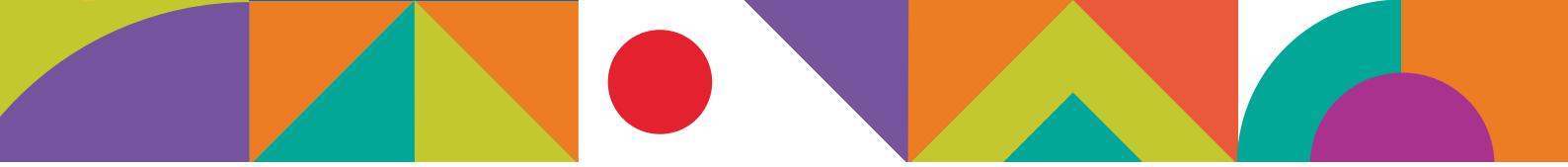
**1.11** In addition to the non-statutory advice documents, there is a growing body of support material, schemes of work and resources; much of it digital, available to schools. Such material, however, has the status of guidance in that the local agreed syllabus is the statutory requirement for teaching RE in schools.

### Agreed syllabuses in Sutton

**1.12** The first agreed syllabus for Sutton was published in 1996. This current 2026 revision takes account of the many changes that have occurred since that time.

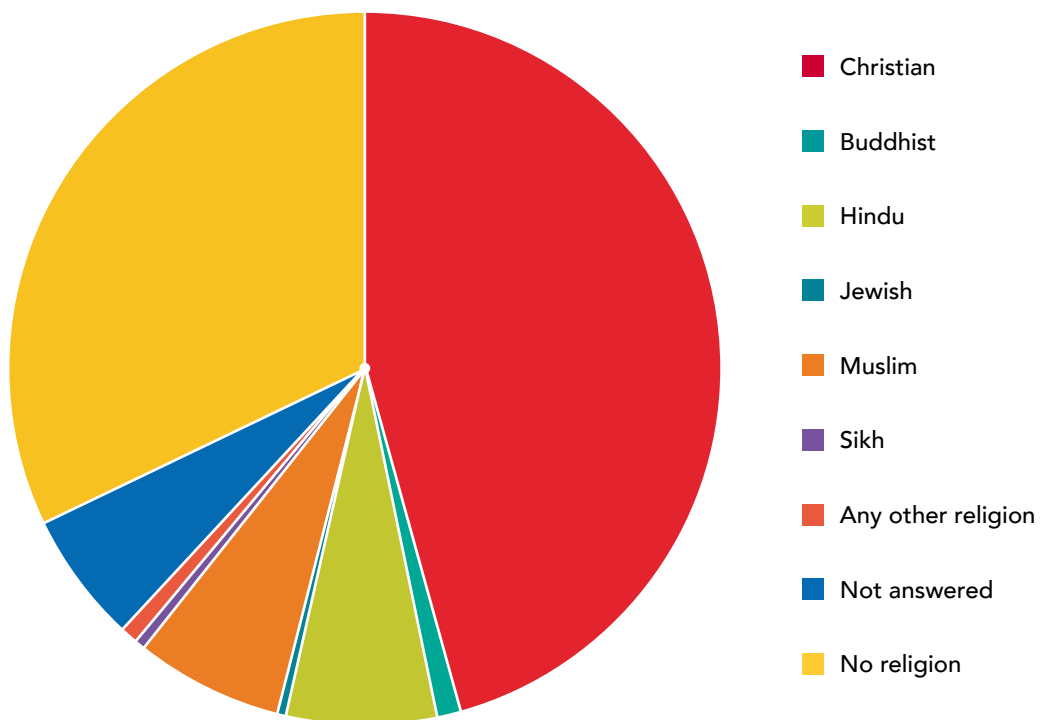
**1.13** This new Sutton agreed syllabus:

- draws on key documents that have been issued since 2016
- follows the advice of the non-statutory National Framework that secular philosophies and worldviews should be part of the scope of RE programmes
- follows the advice of the non-statutory National Framework for Religious Education where it states that 50% of time in RE should be in the study of Christianity
- incorporates clear strategies for progression in learning and identifies steps of progress.



The 2021 Census shows that here in Sutton the following religions and worldviews are present:

### 2021 Census religion data



The 2021 Census figures clearly indicate that the London Borough of Sutton is a multi-faith community. After Christians (45.8%) the largest religious groups in Sutton are made up of Muslims (7%) and Hindus (7%), Buddhists at (0.9%), other religions (0.6%), Jews (0.2%) and Sikh (0.2%). Finally, 32.3% of Sutton Borough state they have no religion.

### 2021 Sutton religion data

Christian	95,960	45.8
Buddhist	1822	0.9
Hindu	14,666	7
Jewish	407	0.2
Muslim	14,736	7
Sikh	447	0.2
Any Other Religion	1244	0.6
Not answered	12,589	6
No Religion	67,769	32.3

When comparing Sutton with London and England census results, SACRE would like to underline the importance of being part of a multi-religious and belief borough where many beliefs and views are part of life here. SACRE and Sutton LA from this agree the importance for all teachers to have access to strong subject knowledge around religion and worldviews.





## Using the agreed syllabus

**1.14** The agreed syllabus provides a single point of reference encompassing statutory requirements, good practice and recommendations. In addition, it should be used by:

- headteachers and governing bodies in ensuring adequate provision for RE/religion and worldviews
- subject leaders in drawing up their school's scheme of work and associated documentation
- headteachers and subject leaders in ensuring progression in pupils' learning
- headteachers and subject leaders who wish to check on statutory requirements
- teachers who wish to develop their understanding of the context of teaching and learning in RE/religion and worldviews
- link governors who have a remit for RE/religion and worldviews development
- faith leaders when looking to understand the nature and content of RE/religion and worldviews within Sutton schools
- parents who wish to learn more about the nature and content of RE/religion and worldviews in schools
- School Improvement Advisors (SIA's) and advisory staff.





## SECTION 2

# What is the contribution of RE/Religion and Worldviews to education and society?

### The contribution of RE/Religion and Worldviews to education

**2.1** Well-taught RE/religion and worldviews makes a significant contribution to the education of children and young people.

*“RE is an important curriculum subject. It is important in its own right and also makes a unique contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and supports wider community cohesion. The Government is keen to ensure all pupils receive high-quality RE.*


*The UK has a rich heritage of culture and diversity. This is continuing today in an era of globalisation and an increasingly interdependent world. Religion and belief for many people forms a crucial part of their culture and identity. Religion and beliefs have become more visible in public life locally, nationally and internationally. The impact of religion on society and public life is constantly brought to public attention through extensive media coverage. The rapid pace of development in scientific and medical technologies and the environmental debate continue to present new issues which raise religious, moral and social questions. The internet enables learning and encourages participation in public discussion of issues in a new and revolutionary way.” <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/religious-education-guidance-in-english-schools-non-statutory-guidance-2010>*

RE/religion and worldviews contribute to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) of all children and young people when taught well in schools, and through this makes a significant contribution to helping “pupils develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain.” Through practising the skills of tolerance and mutual respect as seen in Fundamental British values. RE provides schools with opportunities to develop pupils learning, understanding around people they will meet, work and live alongside. It can help schools build up resilience skills within the lives of children and young people. (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-from-september-2015>)

**2.2** The Sutton agreed syllabus expresses the contribution that well taught RE/religion and worldviews makes through the following aim:

The aim of RE/religion and worldviews is to promote the spiritual, moral, social, emotional, cultural and intellectual development of pupils and of society by encouraging an exploration of and response to those aspects of religion and human experience which raise fundamental questions of belief and value.

**2.3** RE/religion and worldviews teaching consists of learning, understanding and expressing their views and those of others to promote pupils’ spiritual, moral, social, emotional, cultural and intellectual development.



**2.4** The aim of the syllabus is clear in setting out RE/religion and worldviews as an educational activity. In a diverse community such as Sutton, in which there are many religious stances, and stances about religion, this aim should be grounded in the following principles:

Pupils learn about and understand a range of religions and worldviews, 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 found in religions and worldviews
- appreciate and appraise the nature, significance, and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.

Pupils express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- explain reasonably 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 or a worldview.

Pupils gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- find out about and investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth and responding creatively
- enquire into what enables different individuals and communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all
- articulate beliefs, values and commitments clearly to explain why they may be important in their own and other people's lives.

The study of RE/religion and worldviews should therefore:

- encourage pupils to have confidence in their own growing sense of identity as well as valuing and respecting diversity in others
- help pupils in their search for meaning and purpose in life
- Provoke challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human
- Teach pupils to develop respect for others, including people of different faiths and beliefs, and helps challenge prejudice
- neither promote nor undermine any particular religious, spiritual or secular stance
- be accessible to pupils and teachers of any religious stance or none
- encourage pupils to be confident and able to safely express their views and opinions. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion.

**2.5** This agreed syllabus encourages schools to develop an approach to RE/religion and worldviews which, in common with all other aspects of school life, is inclusive.



## Contribution of RE/Religion and Worldviews in preparing Sutton's pupils for life in modern Britain

**2.6** In RE/religion and worldviews pupils will engage, "with the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs; the pupils develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain." (taken from Ofsted guidance to inspectors September 2023) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-eif/schoolinspection-handbook-for-september2023#evaluating-personal-development>

**2.7** "Schools can build pupil's resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling pupil's to challenge extremist views." DfE The prevent duty <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty>. Schools can bring their school community in contact with wider communities around them through making long term links to religious and worldview leaders and places of worship around them. In Sutton this has been a successful model where pupils build up resilience in their understanding of religious issues and complexities to be able to handle difference and diversity well.

**2.8** RE/religion and worldviews has a significant contribution to make to preparing pupils for modern life in Britain by, for example:

- providing a model for reflection, engagement and encounter for life-long learning
- providing opportunities to explore issues of identity and belonging in Sutton
- encouraging the investigation of a range of lifestyles and ways of thinking in order to understand themselves and others better
- encouraging reflection on their own and others' beliefs, values and lifestyles and, with sensitivity, to develop understanding of beliefs
- providing opportunities for the challenge of unhelpful stereotypes and the promotion of key values such as 'respect for all'
- drawing schools, faith groups and individuals into mutually enriching encounters
- fostering personal engagement with, and a sense of responsibility for, the development of a diverse, understanding and equitable society
- encouraging a fascination in how people respond to probing questions which affect the way they approach and shape their lives
- fostering appreciation of the accumulated wisdom of centuries of human experience as distilled in religious beliefs, practices and texts.

## Home, parents and families, community and the right of withdrawal of pupils/students from RE/Religion and Worldviews

**2.9** The inclusion of RE/religion and worldviews in school contributes to a broad and balanced education. The 'success' of RE is not judged in terms of whether a particular child or young person maintains or develops a particular religious, spiritual or secular outlook. In Sutton there is a special relationship between families, the home and school which RE/religion and worldviews seeks to nurture.

**2.10** It is both the choice and responsibility of the home and the faith communities to nurture children into religious, spiritual or secular traditions. The role of RE/religion and worldviews in schools is complimentary to their religious and secular faith background.



**2.11** Because of its broad educational aim, it is hoped that parents and carers will support the school in its RE/religion and worldviews work. They might do this, for example, by:

- taking an interest in how their child is progressing in RE/religion and worldviews,
- contributing their own ideas, insights and experiences,
- helping their child to find good sources of information (including people and places)
- enjoying the experience of learning alongside their child.

**2.12** Parents have the statutory right to withdraw their children from RE/religion and worldviews and teachers in general have a right not to teach the subject. It cannot be stated too strongly, however, that this agreed syllabus has been constructed in the hope that parents will rarely, if ever, wish to exercise their right of withdrawal, and will be prepared to explore with the school ways in which their child can receive their RE. It is hoped that teachers, too, will recognise the educational validity of RE/religion and worldviews and will feel drawn to meet its professional challenges.

**2.13** All schools have a requirement to publish within their school prospectus or on their school website their policy concerning RE and Collective Worship (CW) 'The national curriculum in England: Framework document, Sept 2013 pg 4'. It is helpful for each school to state that they do not support selective withdrawal from RE and CW within their policy statement.

### **RE/Religion and Worldviews, Collective Worship (CW) and assemblies**

**2.14** Collective Worship and assembly in school can:

- promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
- explore values and experiences which contribute to a school's RE programme
- acknowledge, explore and celebrate the diverse nature of the school as well as local, national and international communities.

**2.15** Though RE and CW are linked historically (see 1.3), and Sutton SACRE advises the LA on both aspects of school life (see 1.8), the stance taken in this agreed syllabus is that:

- it is important to regard RE/religion and worldviews and CW as separate aspects of school provision
- care should be taken not to confuse legislative requirements relating to RE with those relating to Collective Worship
- it should not be assumed that a particular teacher's responsibility for RE necessarily includes responsibility for Collective Worship: this should be a matter for consultation and negotiation. The advice can be found here: <https://www.sutton.gov.uk/w/religious-education-in-schools>





## SECTION 3

# How does RE/Religion and Worldviews promote spiritual, moral, social, cultural, emotional and intellectual development?

### RE/Religion and Worldviews and the development of pupils

**3.1** The aim of RE/religion and worldviews as stated in this agreed syllabus (see 2.2) links RE with six forms of development: intellectual, spiritual, moral, social, cultural and emotional.

**3.2** RE/religion and worldviews has a key role in promoting pupils' intellectual development by fostering skills to enable the exploration of and response to, for example:

- identify issues that warrant philosophical or ethical enquiry
- reflect on and communicate their own thoughts, feelings, beliefs, attitudes, values and aspirations,
- engage in sustained discussion of others' viewpoints, analysing and critically evaluating ideas,
- weighing up issues of right and wrong, interpreting and applying symbolism
- investigate and explain the place and importance of religious and secular beliefs and teachings in the lives of individuals, groups and societies
- realise that there are different understandings and measures of reality, and to appreciate that some believe in non-empirical truths.

**3.3** RE/religion and worldviews has a key role in promoting pupils' spiritual development by fostering skills to enable the exploration of and response to, for example:

- how they relate to themselves, to others, to the world around them and, for some, to God
- paradox, mystery and the deepest questions of life such as 'Why are we here?', 'Why do people die?' and 'Why is there so much suffering in the world?'
- the lives of individuals and groups who have inspired others
- what different religious, spiritual and secular traditions teach about the meaning and purpose of life,
- values such as justice, honesty and truth.

**3.4** RE/religion and worldviews has a key role in promoting pupils' moral development by fostering skills to enable the exploration of and response to, for example:

- personal issues and values like 'telling the truth', and 'being good'
- a range of ethical and moral issues
- the role of ethical rules and codes within communities and society
- what different religious, spiritual and secular traditions teach about right and wrong.

**3.5** RE/religion and worldviews has a key role in promoting pupils' social development by fostering skills to enable the exploration of and response to, for example:

- their own growing sense of identity, place in society and different experiences of community, e.g. family, school, nationality and religious or worldview identity
- their experience of working in diverse groups and social settings
- a range of social issues relating to the quality of life in contemporary society
- how religious teachings have shaped and influenced different communities and societies
- commonly shared experiences that communities seek to celebrate and mark, e.g. rites of passage
- how religious, spiritual, and secular traditions lead to specific actions and concerns
- how religion has inspired individuals with a sense of social responsibility that has generated great social change historically.

**3.6** RE/religion and worldviews has a key role in promoting pupils' cultural development by fostering skills to enable the exploration of and response to, for example:

- the place of culture and tradition in their own and others' lives
- the relationship between culture and religion, and how religions and beliefs contribute to cultural identity and practice
- the ways in which those from different cultures have expressed themselves through the creative and expressive arts
- the many ways in which meaning, belief and value can be expressed and communicated.

**3.7** RE/religion and worldviews has a key role in promoting pupils' emotional development by fostering skills to enable the exploration and response to, for example:

- the relationship between our emotions and ability to learn
- the skills that underpin our roles as effective communicators
- the many ways in which we use empathy to understand the feelings and opinions of others
- the way we can engage pupils in motivating themselves and see a purpose in what they are doing
- developing the way in which positive relationships can occur.

Many of these aspects clearly overlap with Citizenship and Personal, Social, Health, and Economic Education (PSHE), and schools are encouraged to make use of RE/religion and worldviews to add to the cross curricular dimension of different areas of learning within the primary and secondary curriculum.

### **RE/Religion and Worldviews and inclusion**

**3.8** The Sutton Agreed Syllabus for RE/religion and worldviews allows for balance in teaching about different religions and worldviews, and between learning about and learning from them. It provides pupils with opportunities to explore their own thinking and beliefs, relating those to what they learn about a range of religious and non-religious perspectives, and reflecting on their learning. RE/religion and worldviews is open to: female and male pupils, believers of principal religious traditions, minority faiths, ethnic, racial or cultural groups, those who are unsure and those who have no religious belief. Belief on the part of pupils is neither assumed by the syllabus, nor are pupils penalised if they have no religious belief or an organised worldview. RE/religion and worldviews is also open to pupils with disabilities, special educational needs, higher and lower achievers and to gifted and talented pupils.

**3.9** RE/religion and worldviews makes a significant contribution to inclusion, particularly in its focus on promoting respect for all. Effective inclusion involves teaching a lively, stimulating RE/religion and worldviews curriculum that:

- builds on and is enriched by the differing experiences that pupils bring

- meets all pupils' learning needs including those with learning difficulties, those who are gifted and talented, all genders, pupils for whom English is an additional language, pupils from all religious and secular communities and pupils from a wide range of ethnic groups and diverse family backgrounds.

**3.10** Access to RE/religion and worldviews can be encouraged by the full range of teaching strategies, including:

- introducing topics using pictures and other visual stimuli
- varying activities to improve concentration
- using group and paired work as well as individual tasks
- using aids to literacy, such as writing frames and assessment for learning (AfL) strategies
- developing the use of ICT within RE
- differentiating resources and tasks.

These approaches should also benefit all pupils within the class, not just pupils with special needs.

### **RE/Religion and Worldviews and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

Please note whilst the DfE and Ofsted refer to pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities as pupils with SEND many of the individuals from this community wish to be referred to as SEND pupils when referring to groups of pupils. Considering this stated position, the use of SEND pupils will be used throughout this report.

**3.11** This guidance is based upon work prepared to support all stakeholders. It is designed to stimulate, support and promote best practice and high standards of achievement in RE/religion and worldviews for all pupils in Sutton's schools. It focuses on teaching and learning in RE/religion and worldviews among pupils with a range of special educational needs.

#### **1. Introduction**

RE can make a powerful contribution to the learning of SEND pupils. They can develop understanding of religious and life issues through discussion, use of artefacts and the creative arts which cannot always be reflected in their written work. What follows is guidance on how RE may be made more accessible for such pupils.

#### **2. Principles for RE and SEND pupils needs**

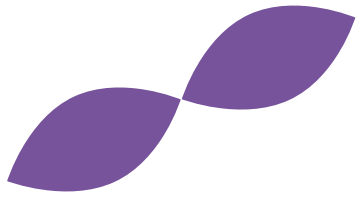
##### **• Valuing the importance of RE for pupils with special needs and disabilities**

RE/religion and worldviews is part of the core curriculum and is a positive entitlement for all pupils and should be taught with the same educational purposes, validity and integrity to all. In special schools the law requires the Agreed Syllabus to be taught 'as far as is practicable', and quality teaching will tailor the syllabus carefully to the special needs of all pupils. The positive effect may be that in RE/religion and worldviews pupils with difficulties, problems or tragedies find the most space to explore and seek to resolve their own conflicts.

##### **• Using pupils' experience of difficulty to develop their capacity to understand searching themes in RE/religion and worldviews**

There are areas in which SEND pupils needs and disabilities may show specific strengths. A pupil's experience of difficulties or suffering could lead to a heightened awareness of searching themes in RE/religion and worldviews. Sometimes small group work with pupils with special needs is particularly important in making space for reflection on experience and meaning.





- **Building on pupils' interest in people and what they do**

Some SEND pupils show more awareness of people's feelings and a curiosity about what people do. This can lead to an interest in the effect of religious belief on people and interest in how individual religious people lead their lives. This may involve pupils working on learning from religion and human experience in which pupils consider things for themselves.

- **Valuing pupils' use of religious language**

Some pupils with special needs and disabilities may show a lack of inhibitions in using religious and spiritual language, such as 'soul', 'heart' and 'spirit'. This can lead them into a spiritual perception of religion and human experience and an engagement with the symbolic.

- **Being sensitive to the variety of pupils' understanding of religious concepts**

It is difficult to generalise about the appropriateness of introducing certain religious concepts to pupils with special needs owing to the wide range of their needs. Teachers need to be sensitive in judging the appropriateness of different material on, for example, miracles and healing, which may be perceived differently by pupils with different disabilities. RE/religion and worldviews seeks to develop sensitive and respectful attitudes, and these can be exemplified by teaching which is sensitive and respectful.

- **Allowing pupils to engage with explicit religious material**

RE/religion and worldviews which lets the emotion and power of explicit religious materials loose in the classroom and welcomes personal responses can provide powerful opportunities for spiritual development for pupils with a variety of special educational needs. An overemphasis on seeing special needs pupils as needing a 'small step' approach can block the development of a vital and dynamic form of RE/religion and worldviews. Some pupils may respond to the 'burning core' of questions that engage the imagination and often lead from the spiritual into RE/religion and worldviews.

- **Promoting pupils use of the arts as a way of expressing themselves**

Send pupils needs and disabilities may have an enjoyment and engagement with art, music, dance and drama. Using these forms of expression can be very effective with SEND pupils.

- **Recognising pupils intuitive responses to religious issues**

Send pupils may show a more intuitive approach to religion and human experience, and this may be expressed through questions, insights or gestures. These intuitive moments can display leaps of understanding which are at odds with their understanding of other concepts. Some SEND pupils needs will show a willingness to share a spiritual response. These achievements can be celebrated and noted by the teacher, but often no written product of achievement exists.

- **Valuing pupils achievement through creative forms of assessment and recording**

These forms need to be developed in order to reflect moments of intuition, insight and response. A 'Wall of Wisdom', where pupils deep comments and questions about religion and human experience are written can be displayed in class, or a photographic or video record of significant events can be kept, or a running record in the teachers' notes.

### **3. Educational contexts**

The principles set out above apply to SEND pupils needs in all settings. These include SEND pupils in mainstream schools, units attached to mainstream schools, PRUs, hospital schools and special schools. Pupils have a wide range of backgrounds and needs, including learning, emotional and behavioural difficulties. In RE these may be accentuated by differences of home and faith backgrounds. It is important to recognise that all pupils can achieve in RE/religion and worldviews, and teachers have the task of unlocking that potential and facilitating that achievement.



#### 4. Adaption in RE/religion and worldviews

The 1996 and 2001 Education Act provides for an entitlement for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum. A wide range of ability and experiences exists within any group of pupils. Teachers need to be able to provide equal opportunities in learning through a flexible approach and skills which differentiate teaching and learning, matching the challenge of RE/religion and worldviews work to individual learners' needs.

Adaption within RE/religion and worldviews involves meeting the individual needs of pupils in ways that are relevant to their life experiences. Successful adaption is dependent on planning, teaching and learning methods and assessment. This requires:

- an understanding by teachers of the ways in which pupils learn
- matching work to pupils' previous experience
- an understanding of factors which may hinder or prevent pupils learning
- careful analysis of the knowledge and skills which comprise a particular learning task
- structured teaching and learning which will help pupils to achieve and to demonstrate their learning outcomes
- providing imaginative learning experiences which arouse and sustain pupils' interest
- supporting the learning which takes place in RE/religion and worldviews by what is taught in other curriculum areas.

Adaption strives to help all pupils to learn together through providing a variety of tasks at any one time. Pupils can also be given some choice over what and how they learn so their learning reflects their interests and needs.

The ethos of a school and the work of individual teachers is very influential in RE/religion and worldviews. A positive ethos facilitates differentiated teaching through excellence in relationships based on mutual respect. Two factors make an important contribution:

- attitudes to learning - a philosophy which encourages purposeful learning and celebrates effort alongside success, as well as helping pupils take responsibility for their own engagement in tasks,
- a safe, stimulating environment which recognises individual needs of pupils, sets appropriate challenges and builds on a positive, praising classroom culture.

#### 5. Planning

Once schools are familiar with the requirements of the Sutton Agreed Syllabus and have chosen which religions are to be studied in each Key Stage; long, medium and short term planning can be put in place that includes teaching and learning for SEND pupils needs. Special schools have the flexibility to modify the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus to meet the needs and disabilities of their pupils, such as selecting materials from an earlier key stage or by planning to focus on just two religions.

The development of pupils' individual education programmes (IEPs) allows for RE/religion and worldviews to be provided according to pupils' needs. This might include; focusing on communication, social, sensory or other skills to which RE/religion and worldviews can make a significant contribution. Some pupils may need additional experiences to consolidate or extend their understanding of specific concepts, so timing needs to be flexible enough to allow for this. Where teaching is good, the specific skills of reflection, expression and discernment will not be neglected.

Planning should provide for:

- the range of pupil ability in the group, with differentiated activities
- the past and present experience of pupils

- the family background of pupils
- the individual needs of pupils, including their special educational needs
- a range of opportunities to assess progress and to report to parents.

## **6. Teaching and learning approaches for SEND pupils.**

A wide variety of approaches can be used, including: artefacts, video, visits and visitors, reflection, stilling and experiential activities, classroom assistants, the widest possible range of sensory and experiential approaches, and use of ICT including internet, a digital camera and scanner, big mac switches, concept keyboards and overlays.

## **7. Recording pupil achievement.**

SEND pupils with needs and disabilities want to be able to show their achievement. Teachers need to enable pupils to demonstrate statements of achievement and learning outcomes. For pupils who have greatest difficulty in learning this might be supported by using the DfE's Performance descriptions in RE (P levels). Levels P4 to P8 refer to skills, knowledge and understanding in RE/religion and worldviews. Teachers can also make special use of the eight step progression table. A particular step on the progression table could be broken down into a number of smaller elements and steps to work on and celebrate achievements.

These could include pupils' responses to:

- experiencing an activity
- sharing an awareness of the activity
- using the senses in different ways
- exploring artefacts, experiences, stories, music, or other stimulus materials
- participation in the activity.

The use of the eight level progression table may provide an important tool in enabling teachers to:

- plan future work with objectives, tasks and learning experiences appropriate to pupils' ability and development
- ensure continuity and progression to the next stage
- set appropriate RE targets for pupils' personal IEPs
- recognise pupils' levels of engagement and response.

## **Pupils in special schools**

**3.12** The legislative requirement is that every special school pupil, unless withdrawn by parents, will receive RE/religion and worldviews as far as is practicable. Practicability is related to the special educational needs of the pupils and not, for example, to problems of staffing or premises.

**3.13** In special schools, it is important that the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, emotional and intellectual development of all pupils is addressed. The broad aim of RE/religion and worldviews should be seen to apply to pupils in special schools and units as much as to those in mainstream schools.





## SECTION 4

# What should schools do and consider?

### National Requirements

**4.1** Legislation requires that RE/religion and worldviews is part of the school curriculum for all registered pupils.

**4.2** Legislation requires that:

- in Community, Foundation or Voluntary schools without a religious character, RE/religion and worldviews is taught in accordance with the local agreed syllabus
- Academies must provide RE in accordance with the requirements for agreed syllabuses and have regard to the requirements of the non-statutory National Framework for RE (DFE, 2010) or, where the academy is designated as a school with a religious character, in accordance with the tenets of the specified religion or religious denomination (Academies Funding Agreement, DCSF, October 2006, pp.10-11)
- in Foundation and Voluntary Controlled schools with a religious character, RE must be taught according to the agreed syllabus unless parents request RE/religion and worldviews in accordance with the trust deed of the school
- in Voluntary Aided schools RE must be taught in accordance with the trust deed.

**4.3** RE/religion and worldviews must be included in the curriculum for all registered pupils, including all pupils in reception classes and sixth form but excluding:

- pupils in nursery schools or nursery classes in primary schools
- any person aged nineteen or above for whom further education is being provided at school
- any person over compulsory school age who is receiving part-time education.

**4.4** Parents have the right to withdraw their child from RE/religion and worldviews. (See 2.13)

**4.5** A school prospectus must include details of:

- the RE provided
- the parents' right to withdraw their child from RE.

**4.6** Pupils progress in RE/religion and worldviews should be reported to parents according to current yearly requirements.

**4.7** In all schools, the policy for teaching RE is the responsibility of the governing body and, as with all other curriculum subjects, the delivery is the responsibility of the teachers led by the headteacher.

### Curriculum Time for Religious Education

**4.8** This agreed syllabus is constructed to follow the government advice on time allocation for religious education contained within the DfE 'Religious Education in English schools; non-statutory guidance 2010'.



**4.9** It is recommended that:

- throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage RE should be a discernible element of the curriculum in keeping with the guidance offered in section 7 of this document
- in each of Key Stages 1, 2 and 3, RE/religion and worldviews occupy about 5% of curriculum time. In more specific terms, following the recommendation of the Dearing Report (1997) this means; 36 hours per year for Key Stage 1 (approximately 50 minutes a week), 45 hours per year for Key Stages 2 and 3 (approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes a week)
- RE at Key Stage 4 should be a clearly identifiable element in the curriculum which either follows a publicly accredited course in Religious Education/Studies or is made up of at least three units of work (each unit being at least six hours in duration) in Year 10 and three in Year 11 as set out in section 11 in this document.

**4.10 The Agreed Syllabus conference would also like to highlight:**

- RE/religion and worldviews 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.
- Curriculum time for RE/religion and worldviews is distinct from the time schools may spend on Collective Worship or school assembly. The times given above are for Religious Education.
- There is clearly a common frontier between RE/religion and worldviews and subjects such as literacy, citizenship or PSHE. But the times given above are explicitly for the clearly identifiable teaching of RE/religion and worldviews. Flexible delivery of RE/religion and worldviews curriculum time, through RE/religion and worldviews study days, or weekly themes is possible, and often leads to good standards.
- Any school in which head teachers and governors do not plan to allocate sufficient curriculum time for RE/religion and worldviews is unlikely to be able to enable pupils to achieve the standards set out in this syllabus.

**4.11** In each school there should be a **teacher with lead responsibility for RE**. In a primary school, this would be a subject leader. In a secondary school it would be a head of department who is a subject specialist. The role of this teacher should:

- be clearly set out in a job description which is agreed, regularly reviewed and updated,
- include responsibility to review and monitor the quality and standard of RE within the school. See section 6 of this Agreed Syllabus and support material for further guidance.

**4.12 RE/religion and worldviews documentation** should include:

- a brief policy document, which includes key issues such as monitoring provision and pupil progress, assessment, reporting, dealing with pupils' questions and disclosures, and responding to parents/carers requests for withdrawal
- a scheme of work which, in accordance with the requirements and recommendations of the agreed syllabus, sets out the RE programme for each year group
- links to the school's development plan.

### **What schools should consider**

**4.13** Further RE/religion and worldviews documentation might include:

- a specific action plan for RE



- a portfolio of material which exemplifies and celebrates a range of learning experiences and standards in RE
- support materials for teachers.

**4.14** In drawing up their schemes of work and action plans, the following issues should be considered:

- the active engagement of pupils, including the quality of discussion
- access for all pupils (including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language)
- the challenge of the work (particularly for higher attaining pupils and those designated as gifted or talented)
- the use of ITC
- links with the local community (including the role of visits and visitors)
- opportunities to include personal, local, national and global issues and significant events
- the image and status of RE/religion and worldviews in the school.

**4.15** In a spirit of striving for improvement, schools seeking to develop RE/religion and worldviews might also consider the following:

- using the Sutton monitoring and review of RE/religion and worldviews annual form as a means of professional dialogue and identifying key areas for development
- the continuing professional development available to teachers (courses and programmes locally and nationally)
- how good practice is shared and developed
- the adequacy and fairness of funding, in relation to other subjects of the curriculum
- the use which is made of local support such as the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) and Consultants,
- the use of further available support such as material which is available on the Internet, non-statutory guidance which is offered by the Department for education (DFE), and the publications and services of organisations like the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) [www.natre.org.uk](http://www.natre.org.uk), RE-Hubs UK [www.re-hubs.uk](http://www.re-hubs.uk) and RE Online - [www.reonline.org.uk](http://www.reonline.org.uk).





## SECTION 5

# Religious education in Sutton

**Intent: What is the nature and scope of RE/Religion and wWorldviews?**

### Exploring and Responding

**5.1** Good RE/religion and worldviews brings together the processes of **learning about** and **expressing** and **deploying skills** around the study of religion and worldviews (see 2.2).

#### **5.2 The process of knowing about and understanding Religion and Worldviews:**

- focuses on those strands or aspects of religion and human experience that seeks to understand beliefs, teaching and sources, practices and ways of life and forms of expression
- consists of more than information-gathering in that it includes identifying the underlying concepts and theme
- enables pupils to engage with the material through developing a range of identifiable skills (see list 5.8 below).

#### **5.3 The process of expressing and communicating ideas about Religion and Worldviews:**

- encourages pupils to make links between their learning and their own personal experiences through considering; identity and belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments.
- enables pupils to develop their thinking about their own and others' experiences so that they are enabled to develop in their thinking about their own experiences in life, as they compare their experiences with those of others
- encourages pupils to express their responses in a range of forms and styles (representational, symbolic etc)
- encourages pupils to be sensitive to a range of human responses that might differ from their own.

#### **5.4 The process of gaining and deploying skills needed for the study of Religion and Worldviews**

- encourages pupils to use higher order skills in their work and think creatively and deeply about religion and world views
- enables pupils to make links between other areas of the curriculum.

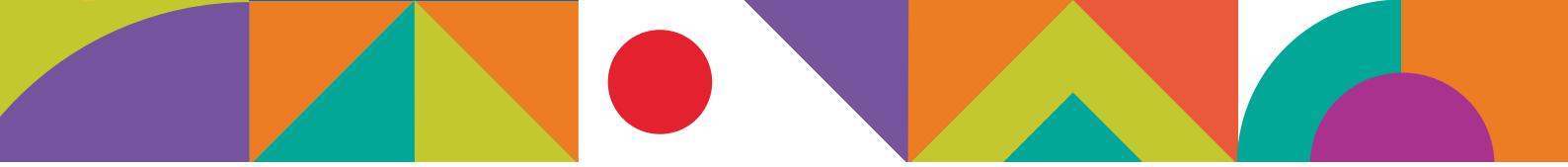
**5.5** Good RE/religion and worldviews enables pupils to develop an understanding of concepts and themes that underpin religion and human experience.

### Rationale for RE

#### **5.6 RE as multi-disciplinary**

RE is about developing religious literacy, therefore this syllabus promotes an understanding of religion and worldviews which best fulfils this purpose. This is one rooted in a multi-disciplinary understanding of the subject. This provides a balanced diet ensuring that pupils are seeing religion and worldviews through different lenses, and places RE within a strong, and well-established academic tradition.

#### **5.7 What do we mean by a discipline?**



A discipline is widely understood to have:

- An intellectual history/tradition which is manifested institutionally through higher education
- A body of knowledge founded on core concepts and theories
- A particular object of research/investigation, although this might be shared across disciplines
- Specific terminology and language to define and explain concepts
- Research methods and modes of enquiry according to its specific requirements
- A specific stance towards the nature of reality (i.e. views the world through a particular lens)
- Particular grounds upon which valid truth claims are made/ways of validating knowledge (epistemology),
- A group of intellectual followers (academics) who conduct new research in that discipline and bring changes to it over time.

### 5.8 What do we mean by multi-disciplinary?

RE/religion and worldviews as an academic school curriculum subject is not itself a single discipline. Instead, it is rooted in a range of different disciplines or disciplinary fields. We need to understand which disciplines it draws on, to understand the object of investigation and the research methods to employ in RE/religion and worldviews. This ensures that content chosen for RE/religion and worldviews is appropriate and well-established within academic traditions and ensures that pupils use and develop a range of subject-specific skills.

### 5.9 How do we understand RE/religion and worldviews as a multi-disciplinary subject?

In this syllabus we assert that RE/religion and worldviews is rooted in three key disciplines or disciplinary fields. These are theology, philosophy and the human/social sciences. In this syllabus they are re-contextualised for the school context in the following ways:

In the Sutton agreed syllabus we have identified the following disciplines that were used in the writing of our support schemes of work from reception to KS5:

**History** – This is about asking questions that historians would ask. It requires pupils to think like historians, to look at religion and worldviews through a history lens. Pupils will explore questions and answers raised through considering the validity of evidence, accounts and interpretation for beliefs and practices in religion and worldviews.

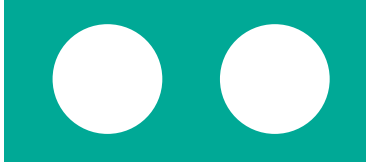
**Philosophy** - This is about asking questions that thinkers would ask. It requires pupils to think like philosophers, to look at concepts through a philosophical lens. Pupils will explore questions and answers raised through considering the nature of truth, belief, knowledge, existence, and morality.

**Empathy** – This is about recognising personal meaning. It requires pupils to recognise personal meaning for themselves as well as others. Pupils will learn to accurately represent people's beliefs and practices being able to articulate their religious or worldview background/s.

**Theology** – This is about asking questions that believers would ask. It requires pupils to think like theologians, to look at concepts through a theological lens. Pupils will explore questions and answers that arise from inside religions and worldviews about the nature of the divine.

**Debate** – This is about asking questions about the nature of truth and reality. It requires pupils to think critically and argue





logically think, providing evidence to ethical questions in life that religions and worldviews engage with.

**Experienter** - This is about asking questions that people who study lived reality or phenomena would ask. It requires pupils to think like human and social scientists, to look at concepts through a human/social science lens. Pupils will explore questions and answers raised in relation to the impact of religions and worldviews on people and their lives.

**Worldview** – This is about understanding that there is no neutral position or thought. We are the combination of our upbringing, life experience and our beliefs. These together give us a unique way of understanding/viewing the world and in turn affects the way we engage with and understand religion and worldviews.

### Concepts, themes and skills

**5.10** General concepts and themes that underpin religion and human experience include:

- authority
- believing
- belonging
- celebration
- charity
- commitment
- duty
- God
- identity
- justice
- prayer
- revelation
- ritual
- sacredness
- symbolism
- worship
- diversity
- mediation
- faith
- hope.

**5.11 Specific concepts and themes** linked to specific religious traditions include:

- unity (Baha'i)
- dukkha/unsatisfactoriness (Buddhist)
- Incarnation (Christian)
- avatar/incarnation of Vishnu (Hindu)
- human responsibility (Humanist)
- mitzvah/religious duty (Jewish)
- tawhid/Oneness (Muslim)
- guru/spiritual leader (Sikh)





- nature (pagan),
- purity (Zoroastrian).

**5.12** The development of skills is crucial to learning in RE/religion and worldviews. They also impact on life-long learning in that, without them, pupils will not approach religion and human experience in an informed and enquiring spirit. RE/religion and worldviews provides opportunities for pupils to develop the key skills of:

- **Communication** through developing a broad and accurate religious vocabulary, reading and responding to a range of written and spoken language (including sacred texts, stories, poetry, prayers, liturgy and worship), communicating ideas using the creative and expressive arts, talking and writing with understanding and insight about religious and other beliefs and values, reflecting critically on ultimate questions of life, using reasoned arguments.
- **Application of number** through calendrical reckoning, collecting, recording, presenting and interpreting data involving graphs, charts and statistical analysis.
- **Information technology** through using the internet selectively, researching information about religion and worldviews, teaching and practices, using email to communicate and analyse information with people of differing beliefs and cultures, using spreadsheets and databases to handle and present data relevant to the study of religion and worldviews.
- **Working with others** through sharing ideas, discussing beliefs, values and practices, collaborating with each other and developing respect and sensitivity.
- **Improving their own learning and performance** through setting targets as part of RE/religion and worldviews development, reviewing their achievements and identifying ways to improve their work.
- **Problem solving** through recognising key issues to do with religious belief, practice, and expression, interpreting and explaining findings and making personal decisions on religious issues, ethical dilemmas and priorities in life.

### The attitudes and qualities that good RE/Religion and Worldviews teaching should foster

**5.13** Successful learning in RE requires a learning environment that encourages in both teachers and pupils:

- self-awareness
- curiosity
- respect for all
- sensitivity towards and understanding of others
- open-mindedness
- trust
- community
- appreciation and wonder.

**5.14** Such attitudes and qualities will be expressed in a range of ways including:

- an awareness of one's own developing views and perceptions
- a curiosity about the world of other people and an active interest in how they communicate their beliefs and values
- a willingness to respect the values and beliefs of others
- a willingness to take part in the human search for truth, purpose and meaning
- a fascination with how people respond to those deep questions which affect the way in which they approach and



- influence their lives
- becoming lifelong learners.

**Bringing it all together**

**GOOD RE/Religion and Worldviews IS WHERE ALL THIS COMES TOGETHER**





## SECTION 6

# Attainment and achievement in RE/Religion and Worldviews

### Impact: How is progress made in RE/Religion and Worldviews?

#### A question of balance

**6.1** In RE/religion and worldviews, it is important that pupils:

- make progress in both knowing about and learning from religion and worldviews
- are challenged by the activities and tasks in which they are engaged
- achieve standards which match with their expected capabilities
- understand how they can improve further.

#### A broad notion of achievement

**6.2** This agreed syllabus has incorporated steps of progression in keeping with national non-statutory guidance. It is important, however, that both teachers and pupils:

- avoid the assumption that only that which can be measured is of worth
- recognise that not every piece of work must be assessed
- retain a sense of enjoyment in both teaching and learning.

**6.3** This agreed syllabus encourages a broad understanding of achievement/progress in RE/religion and worldviews. This is seen in the way that pupils:

- develop their capacity to use religious and philosophical language
- think reflectively about human experience
- express their thoughts and feeling using creativity in RE
- demonstrate interest and enthusiasm
- show imagination, empathy and insight.

**6.4** Therefore, teachers of RE/religion and worldviews are encouraged to adopt a manageable and flexible approach to recording pupil attainment and achievement in RE/religion and worldviews. They might, for example, use some or all of the following methods:

- within the context of regular marking and feedback to pupils, setting some more formal assessment tasks for which levels are used
- highlighting and displaying specific examples of achievement, including pupils' statements and questions, for all to note and aspire to
- recording examples of attainment and achievement in its breadth and diversity



- developing a shared language through which targets for future development can be expressed.

### The role of steps for progress in RE/Religion and Worldviews

**6.5** Steps for progress assist teachers in:

- planning schemes of work matched to the appropriate key stage
- identifying sharply focused and challenging tasks
- assessing pupils' progress and identifying their next steps
- explaining to pupils how they can make progress
- recording and reporting on pupils' attainment and progress and evaluating the impact of teaching on learning.

### The steps to progression used in this agreed syllabus

**6.6** The steps to progression in RE/religion and worldviews used in this agreed syllabus have drawn on and adapted those produced by the Religious Education Council of England and Wales 2014/2015 <http://resubjectreview.recouncil.org.uk/re-review-report>.

**6.7** In order to make progress in RE/religion and worldviews, pupils add to their understanding as they extend their use of subject-specific vocabulary and encounter the same concepts in the contexts of different religions / worldviews. In particular, they learn at greater depth, which is reflected in:

#### **1. Increasing the level of detail**

For example, while 5-7 year olds approach expression at word level, 7-11 year olds consider how feelings and beliefs are expressed in books and other texts.

#### **2. Moving from local to global contexts**

For example, KS1 schemes of work begin to develop the idea of religion with 5-7 year olds through concrete 'holy things' that are found locally or in pupils' families. It is proposed that with this age group teachers draw on religions / worldviews familiar to pupils, that are found in the area or are historically important. 4-5 year olds may never have encountered religion previously. It is important that teachers tune into and develop any language that pupils may already use.

#### **3. Making increasing links between smaller ideas**

For example, 7-11 year olds make links between different elements of a religion – (year 3: How did Jesus and Buddha make people stop and think? Year 6: What qualities are important for present day religious leaders?).

#### **4. Including exceptions and contrasts**

For example, 14-16 year olds consider contrasting views of the nature of spirituality and belief.

#### **5. Moving from simple to complex and controversial ideas**

An important part of this process is the practice of keeping records of pupils' work and passing it on to their next teacher(s) and schools. This will help pupils build on earlier knowledge. It is also important to keep records of their responses to transferable questions so that pupils can reconsider them as they get older. Digital records



can be created quickly and can be passed on to other schools.

### 6. Understanding diversity in increasingly complex settings

For example, 11-14 year olds consider how diversity within religions / worldviews may be related to historical or cultural influences or disagreements over beliefs.

### 7. Recognising and handling an increasingly wide range of interpretations

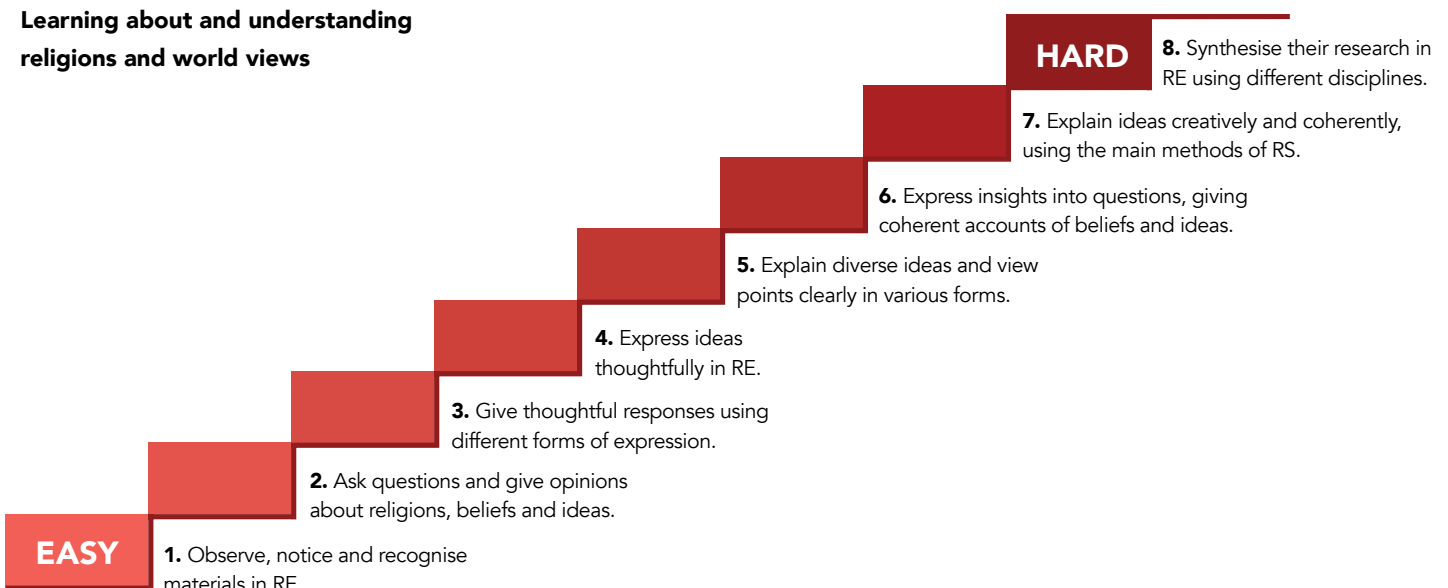
For example, 14-16 year olds consider how the grand narratives of every religion / worldview are interpreted differently. (Ideas in 6.8 adapted from 'Putting Big Ideas into practice' by Barbara Wintersgill)

**6.8** There are eight stepped descriptions of increasing difficulty. Teachers should judge which description best fits the pupil's performance. When doing so, each description should be considered alongside the descriptions for adjacent levels:

- at Key Stage 1: the great majority of pupils are expected to work within steps 1-3, the expected attainment for the majority of pupils at the end of the key stage being step 2
- at Key Stage 2: the great majority of pupils are expected to work within steps 2-5, the expected attainment for the majority of pupils at the end of the key stage being step 4
- at Key Stage 3: the great majority of pupils are expected to work within steps 3-7, the expected attainment for the majority of pupils at the end of the key stage being step 5/6
- at Key Stage 4: study leading to national qualifications (such as GCSE courses), will include assessment arrangements. School-designed work should require pupils to work at levels appropriate to their age and capability
- post-16: study leading to national qualifications (such as GCE courses) will include assessment arrangements. School-designed work should require pupils to work at levels appropriate to their age and capability.

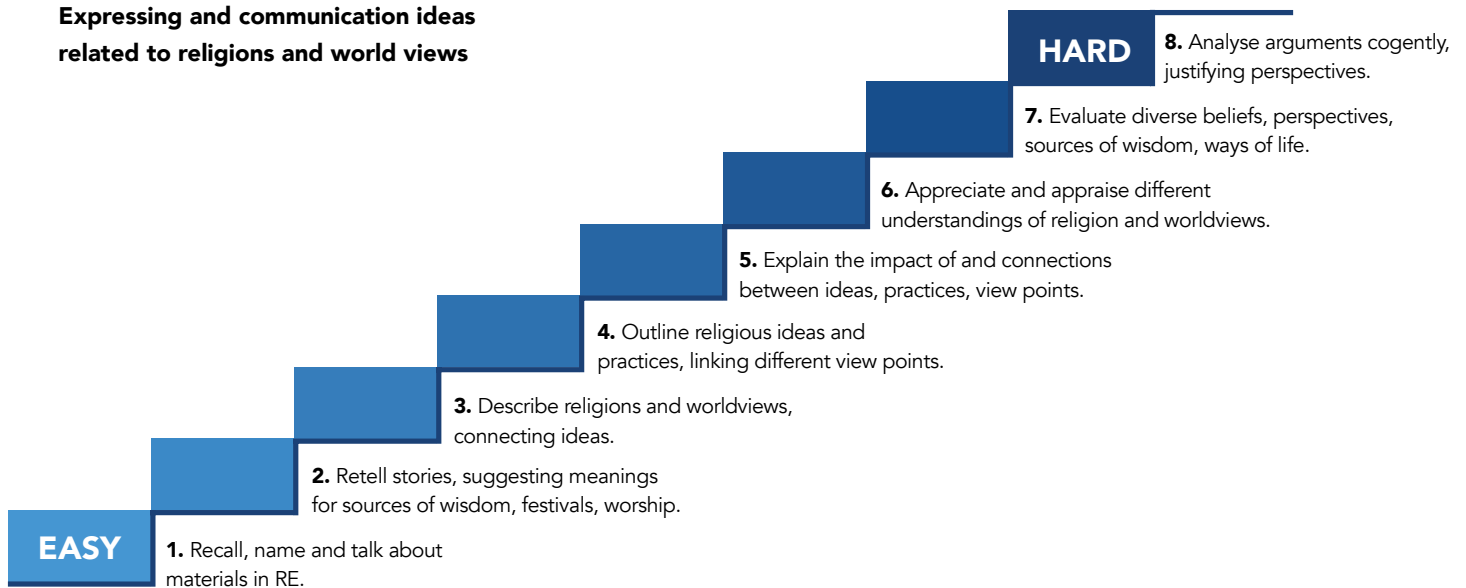
### Eight steps in relation to the three elements of the aim of RE

#### Learning about and understanding religions and world views

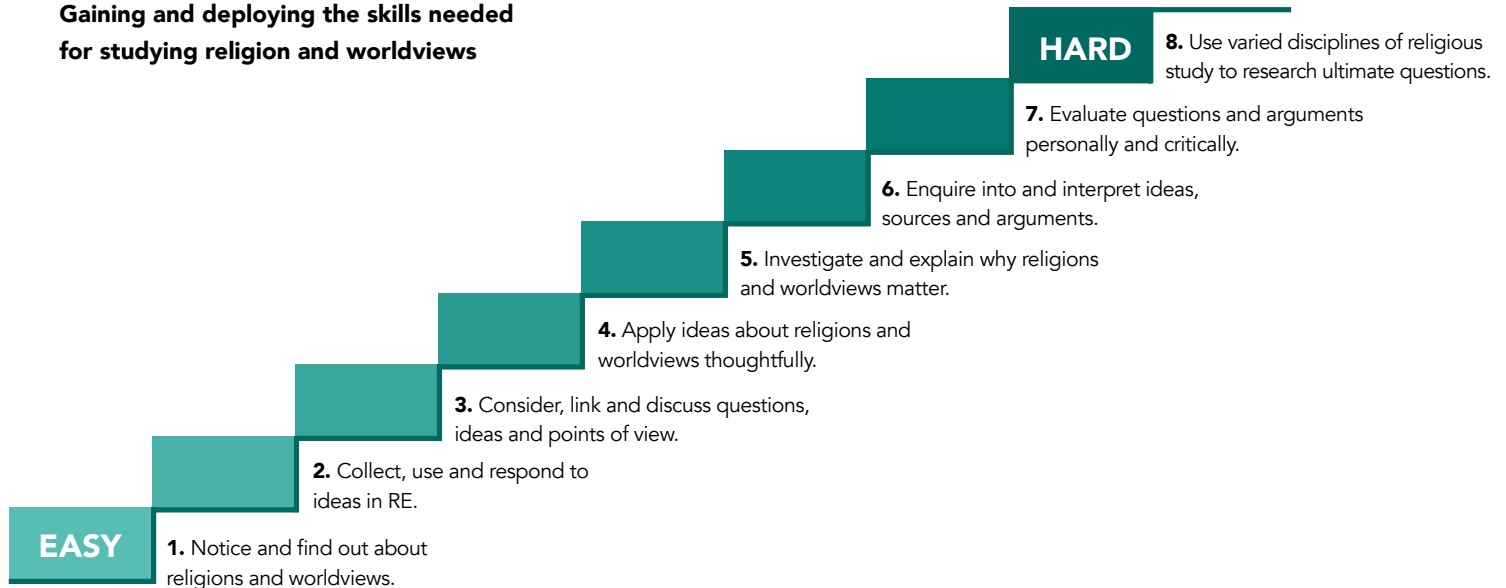




### Expressing and communication ideas related to religions and world views



### Gaining and deploying the skills needed for studying religion and worldviews



**6.9** In some schools, there will be some pupils whose attainment is below that of step one. For these pupils, Sutton pre-8-step descriptors for RE can be used as a source of reference. (see appendix B)



## SECTION 7

# RE/Religion and Worldviews at the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS - nursery and reception pupils ages 3 to 5)

### Intent: Statutory requirements

**7.1** RE/religion and worldviews is a statutory requirement for children in reception classes. Nevertheless, it is recommended that RE should be a discernible element in the experience of children in both nursery and reception classes. In line with the DFE's 2013 profile RE should provide these opportunities for pupils through planned, purposeful play and a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity.

Sutton LA provides over twenty schemes of work (see 7.14 for the summary list) for schools and EYFS settings to draw upon in creating their curriculum. Our expectation is that at least 6 of these are to be covered by each reception class annually/ Schools may wish to use more, which would delight us.

The EYFS framework <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2> (July 2025) makes clear reference to all children learning about diversity and religious communities and celebrations. The document states:

“Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children’s personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries, and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes, and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically, and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children’s vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.”

RE/religion and worldviews is referred to in the EYFS framework in the following places:

### Understanding the World

#### ELG: People, Culture and Communities

Children at the expected level of development will:

- ✓ Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.

#### ELG: Past and Present

Children at the expected level of development will:

- ✓ Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society
- ✓ Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class
- ✓ Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.





## **ELG: The Natural World**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- ✓ Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants
- ✓ Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class
- ✓ Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

### **Implementation: What is distinctive about the Early Years Foundation Stage?**

**7.2** Young children experience and respond to the world around them with all their senses. During the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the provision of a wide variety of learning experiences that value all people and include stimulating resources, 'relevant to all of the children's cultures and communities' (Development Matters) alongside positive interaction with adults and other children, help a child to make sense of the world. These elements are reflected in the Early Learning goals.

**7.3** RE/religion and worldviews can help children to begin to create for themselves an image or map of the world, often very personal to them, to which they can give expression through their play, conversation and early attempts at representational drawing, painting and model-making. In this way children demonstrate their growing understanding of how the wider world relates to them.

**7.4** In the context of RE/religion and worldviews, a variety of practical experiences and stories will enable children to become familiar with relevant concepts and skills and to learn to articulate their understanding. This will happen as they become familiar with stories from a range of cultural and religious traditions, including stories that reflect the diversity of children's experiences.

**7.5** The experiences offered will involve children in a voyage of self-discovery in which they become aware of the contrast between their own identity and beliefs and the identity and beliefs of others, including an understanding of the similarities and differences between families, communities and traditions.


**7.6** Teachers and other adults working in the EYFS will need to take account of the fact that every child is unique and that children enter school at varying points between the ages of three and five. Not all children will therefore have the same learning experience in every aspect of RE/religion and worldviews. They will also bring with them a variety of home and other experiences, which should be celebrated and reflected within the setting.

### **Impact: What experiences should children encounter?**

**7.7** Part of the significance of RE within the EYFS is that it provides a developing structure for understanding the habits of others, religious and secular customs and rituals, and the ways in which these influence likes and dislikes, preferences and individual choices.

**7.8** In order to promote effective development of their understanding of the relationship between religions and human experience, children should have opportunities to:

- Share religious and culturally significant events and practices 'to strengthen the positive impressions children have of their own cultures and faiths and those of others in their community,' (Development Matters) e.g., Christmas, Chinese New Year, Diwali, Easter, Eid, Guru Nanak's birthday, Harvest, Sukkot, births, birthdays and end-of-year performances.
- Make links between shared events in school and their own experiences at home and in the community, focusing



on common elements e.g. getting ready for special events, visiting places of worship, using special food, clothing, objects, and music.

- Participate in conversation and play, including role play, some of which will encourage them to raise questions about meaning, allow an exploration of similarities and differences, and to begin to be aware of cultural and religious practices. Practitioners should provide an environment that enables children to do this, e.g. through the provision of small world toys and role-play areas with a variety of resources reflecting diversity e.g. such as different places of worship.
- Examine and explore a variety of artefacts of religious, cultural and secular significance for example: things people wear; a Jewish Seder plate, Christian nativity figures; bells (from various traditions), a prayer mat (Muslim tradition); Diva lamps (Hindu tradition); The Five Ks (Sikh tradition).
- Listen and respond to a variety of faith-associated stories, so that they become familiar with them for example: The Christmas story (Christian tradition), Rama and Sita (Hindu tradition), Noah's Ark (Christian, Jewish and Muslim traditions), a story about Guru Nanak (Sikh Tradition), Samara's Eid (Muslim tradition), R.E. interactive book (ICT), Quran Kids stories.
- Undertake practical activities that enable them to develop their growing understanding of religious language and pictorial representations (e.g. symbols, images), using a variety of cross-curricular approaches and ICT Examples would include: making puppets, creating Rangoli patterns (Indian traditions), making models or painting to illustrate a story, writing or talking about an event that is special to them, cooking, food sharing, inviting visitors from different religions and cultures into the setting, talking with adults LGFL Espresso, going on virtual tours.
- Use special terms, including religious ones, when it is helpful and appropriate to do so e.g. 'belief', 'community', 'God', 'prayer', 'celebration', 'symbol', 'love', 'family' and 'religion'.

**7.9** Material used in the EYFS should be drawn where possible from significant human experiences (including the children's own experience) as well as from Christian and other relevant religious and cultural traditions, especially those that reflect the family backgrounds of children and adults in the class.

**Impact: What should children gain from these experiences?**

**7.10** Planning should encourage children to make the connection between practical experiences and underlying concepts and themes ('growth', 'family', 'celebration'). This happens at different points during the EYFS, and children of different ages will relate more readily to some aspects of the suggested RE/religion and worldviews activities than to others. Nursery children will usually engage in practical activities involving a range of sensory experiences and will listen to and begin to respond to stories. In building on this, reception children should be developing the ability to understand and share key experiences in their own and others' lives in terms appropriate to their stage of development.

**7.11** The RE/religion and worldviews related activities suggested in this agreed syllabus (and developed in support material) are related to three broad areas of experience – 'Celebrating Special Times', 'Stories and What They Tell Us' and 'Aspects of Identity and Relationships' - so that engaging in these activities during the Foundation Stage will enable children to begin to:

- acknowledge their own individuality and that of others
- explore the relationships between themselves and those around them
- meet visitors and engage with them in different ways
- listen to stories and respond appropriately to them
- participate, where appropriate, in some aspects of a variety of cultures
- experience a variety of special occasions in the classroom and at school and talk about them
- talk about and visit special places
- share special things, including books, stories, and favourite possessions
- respond to their experiences of nature and the world

- experience a variety of ways of expressing meaning, attempting to use these when expressing their own ideas e.g. writing, talking, making, creating and role-play.

### Using the unit framework

**7.12** The Sutton syllabus reflects key concerns of children of this key stage, as formalised in the early learning goals and EYFS framework. RE-related activities therefore focus on three themes:

- Celebrating Special Times
- Stories and What They Tell Us
- Aspects of Identity and Relationships.

**7.13** The RE/religion and worldviews related activities for the EYFS should contain a balance between two elements:

- knowing and understanding (what people believe, what people do, and how people express themselves)
- expressing their ideas about religion and world views (making sense of who we are, making sense of life, and making sense of values and commitments.

**7.14** The following support materials are available to EYFS practitioners via the Sutton Agreed Syllabus shared drive:

#### **Celebrating Special Times**

- What happens at Christmas?
- What happens at Diwali?
- What happens at Easter?
- What happens at Eid-UI-Fitr?
- What happens at Eid-UI-Adha?
- What happens on Guru Nanak's Birthday?
- What happens at Sukkot?
- What happens at Passover?
- What happens on Buddha day?

#### **Aspects of identity and relationships**

- What is special about being a Muslim?
- In the story of 'The donkey and the tiger skin' what is the special message?
- What makes a place special?
- What can we learn about Christians from visiting a church?
- What is special about being a Hindu?

#### **Stories and what they tell us**

- What does 'The Lost Coin' story tell Christians?
- What does 'Muhammad and the Kitten' story tell us about Muslims?
- What does 'The Good Samaritan' story tell Christians?
- What does 'Gifts for the poor' story tell Buddhists?
- What does 'The gift of friendship' story tell Muslims?
- What does 'The lost sheep' story tell Christians?
- What does 'The hare and tortoise' story tell Humanists?
- What does 'The two brothers' story tell Humanists?





## SECTION 8

# RE/Religion and Worldviews at Key Stage 1 (School years 1&2, pupils age 5 to 7)

### Intent: Statutory requirements

**8.1** RE/religion and worldviews is a statutory requirement for pupils during Years 1 and 2. Pupils are entitled to 36 hours of RE in each school year at Key Stage 1.

**8.2** The content of RE at Key Stage 1 must 'reflect that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain' (The Education Act 1996).

In this agreed syllabus it is compulsory for all schools to provide opportunities for pupils to be taught RE/religion and worldviews around one 'big question' for each year group and smaller unit questions:

In Year 1 the big question is **'What does it mean to belong?'** Investigating the relation between religion, worldviews and believing/belonging.

In Year 2 the big question is **'What can we learn from special stories?'** Investigating the relationship between religious/worldview stories and actions.

#### Year 1 smaller unit questions are:

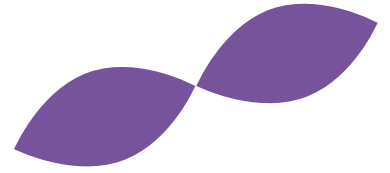
- Why do Christians celebrate Christmas?
- What does it mean to belong to Islam?
- What does it mean to belong to Christianity?
- What can be special about living with family and friends? (In all religions and worldviews)
- What does it mean to belong to Hinduism/Hindu Dharmic religion? OR, What does it mean to belong to Sikhism/Sikhi?
- What does it mean to be non-religious/Humanist?

#### Year 2 smaller unit questions are:

- Where did the world come from and how should we look after it? (In all religions and worldviews)
- Why did Jesus tell stories?
- Why are different books special for different people? (In Christianity and two other religions and worldviews)
- How do we know that Easter is coming? What special story is told at Easter?
- How does special food and fasting help people in their faith? (In all religions and worldviews)
- Choice between two units: A) Be who you are! **OR** B) How can we live in peace? Both units include all religions and worldviews

The agreed syllabus provides schemes of work (medium and lesson plans based around these questions along with support materials) which schools can choose to use or adapt in order for these questions to be covered at Key Stage 1. It is the responsibility of teachers to adapt and develop these schemes of work and support materials to meet the individual needs of their pupils and school.

**8.3** A school scheme of work will need to show for RE/religion and worldviews the order and sequence of the units across each



year. The agreed syllabus includes a long-term plan – showing the sequence of learning and providing a big question that links the six smaller units together in each year group. This ensures that RE/religion and worldviews is clear in planning how pupils learn about religion and worldviews in this subject.

### Implementation: What is distinctive about Key Stage 1?

**8.4** During Key Stage 1, pupils are beginning to develop an awareness of themselves and others and to recognise that there are stories, people, places, times and values that are especially important to themselves and to others.

**8.5** They are also beginning to develop their questioning skills which will help them to make sense of and respond to the world in which they live. Through this process of questioning, they will begin to:

- be aware that some questions are puzzling and may not have easy or right answers, even for adults
- understand that people's beliefs and values affect the way in which they live
- make links between their own experiences and those of others.

**8.6** As pupils progress through this key stage, they will begin to make more sense of key concepts and should be encouraged to establish a vocabulary of words related to religion.

**8.7** Pupils will be developing an ability to express their own feelings, reactions and responses. They will also be learning to respond to others in appropriate ways.

### Impact: Breadth of learning experiences across the key stage

**8.8** Each of the RE units for this key stage develops a theme, which draws from a range of religious material. In Year 1 the big question is **'What does it mean to belong?'** Investigating the relation between religion and belonging throughout the year. In Year 2 it is **'What can we learn from special stories?'** Investigating the relationship between religious/worldview stories and actions. The units in the support materials also encourage pupils to relate what they are learning to their own and others' experiences.

**8.9** The support materials provide the following information about each of the RE units:

- the title of the unit (in the form of a question)
- a brief description of what should be covered
- prior learning that the unit draws on
- future learning that the unit contributes to
- key vocabulary and concepts
- outside of the classroom learning opportunities
- a sequence of questions which provide a structure for the unit.



Support material has been written for each of the units in Key Stage One. Specific to each unit is an assessment task matched to appropriate steps for progress ensuring teachers can measure in a variety of ways pupils progress in RE/religion and worldviews.

**8.10** While following the requirements of the agreed syllabus, educators should apply their professional judgement in adapting or developing the units of work. They may choose, for example:

- to teach a unit across a key stage, when their classes consist of both Year 1 and 2 pupils
- to tailor content and activities to draw upon the family backgrounds of their pupils, but without losing any unit's character.



## SECTION 9

# RE/Religion and Worldviews at Key Stage 2 (School years 3-6, pupils age 7 to 11)

### Intent: Statutory requirements

**9.1** RE is a statutory requirement for pupils during Years 3-6. Pupils are entitled to 45 hours of RE in each school year at Key Stage 2.

**9.2** The content of RE at Key Stage 2 must 'reflect that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christians, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions presented in Great Britain' (The Education Act 1996).

In this agreed syllabus it is compulsory for all schools to provide opportunities for pupils to be taught RE/religion and worldviews around one 'big question' for each year group and smaller unit questions (6 in each year group as set out below):

In Year 3 the big question is **'How are symbols and sayings important in religion?'** Investigating how symbols and sayings are used within religion and worldviews to encapsulate important teachings, beliefs or practices.

In Year 4 the big question is **'What is important to the people in my local community?'** Investigating how religion and worldviews are important to the pupil's local community.

In Year 5 the big question is **'What impact do beliefs have on actions?'** Investigating the relationship between beliefs and practices, how organised and personal worldviews are created and operate.

In Year 6 the big question is **'How important are the similarities and differences between and within religions?'** Investigating the relationship between and within religions and worldviews?' Investigating what religion and worldviews share and differ over, evaluating the importance of these similarities and differences within and between religion and worldviews.

#### Year 3 smaller unit questions are:

- How do Jews celebrate their beliefs at home and in the Synagogue?
- What can we learn about special symbols and signs used in religions? (In Christianity, Islam and secular worldviews)
- How did Jesus and Buddha make people stop and think?
- How and why do Hindus celebrate Holi? What celebration can we design to mark a special time in our class or year group?
- What do Sikhi sayings tell us about Sikhi beliefs?
- What is the significance of light in religion for Christian, Jewish and Hindu people?

#### Year 4 smaller unit questions are:

- Why is Easter important to Christians?
- How and why do Hindu people worship at home and in the mandir?
- What religions and worldviews are represented in our neighbourhood? OR What makes me the person I am? (In all religions and worldviews)
- Why is the Bible special for Christians?
- What happens when someone gets married? (In all religions and worldviews)
- What is important to Humanists?



**Year 5 smaller unit questions are:**

- How is Christmas celebrated around the world?
- How do Christian people try to follow Jesus' example?
- What do religions believe about God? (In all religions and worldviews)
- What inner forces affect how we think and behave? (In all religions and worldviews)
- Why are Muhammad and the Qur'an important to Muslims?
- A choice between A) 'Thankfulness' unit or B) 'The Kites are flying - peace' unit both units cover all religions and worldviews

**Year 6 smaller unit questions are:**

- What are the sources of the story about what happened on the first Easter Sunday?
- What do people believe about life after death? (In all religions and worldviews)
- What qualities are important to present day religious leaders? All faiths – asking pupils to compare at least three different religious/worldview leaders
- How do people express their faith through the arts in Christianity?
- What similarities and differences do religions and worldviews share?
- How could we design a celebration that involved everyone, whether religious or not, in a meaningful and imaginative way? Kwanzaa (In all religions and world views)

The agreed syllabus provides schemes of work (a medium plan and lesson plans based around these questions along with support materials) which schools can choose to use or adapt in order for these questions to be covered at Key Stage 2. These support units can be found on the Sutton agreed syllabus drive. It is the responsibility of teachers to adapt and develop these schemes of work and support materials to meet the individual needs of their pupils and school.

**9.4** A school scheme of work for RE/religion and worldviews will need to show the order and sequence of the units across each year. The agreed syllabus has created a long-term plan – showing the sequence of learning and providing a 'big question' that links the 6 smaller units together in each year group. This ensures that RE/religion and worldviews is clear in planning how pupils learn about religion and worldviews in this subject.

**Implementation: What is distinctive about lower Key Stage 2? (Years 3 and 4)**

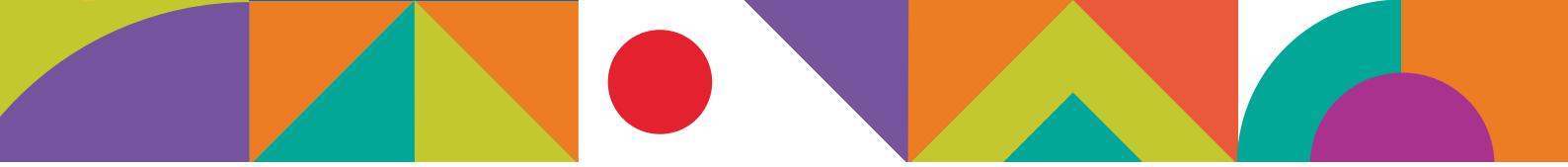
**9.5** During Lower Key Stage 2, pupils will be developing their interest in, as well as knowledge and understanding of, different religious beliefs and practices as well as secular world views. They will begin to recognise diversity within, as well as between, religious and cultural traditions.

**9.6** Most pupils will be developing their ways of thinking and responding, though some will be more open to different levels of meaning - within a story, for example - than others.

**9.7** Information gathering skills are developing and pupils will be able to use religious and other specialist vocabulary with growing confidence, building on and consolidating their learning from Key Stage 1.

**9.8** Pupils will be able to talk about and respond to questions about their own beliefs and lifestyles, making comparisons with other's experiences.

**9.9** Pupils begin to be aware how values are shaped by a persons beliefs and worldview.



### What is distinctive about upper Key Stage 2? (Years 5 and 6)

- 9.10** During Upper Key Stage 2, pupils will be developing an understanding of the connection between beliefs and actions. They will increasingly understand some of the ways in which cultural and social influences affect how people practice their religion and will be able to compare their own beliefs and lifestyles with those of others.
- 9.11** Most pupils will be able to identify underlying ideas. They will be able to use religious and technical vocabulary with greater confidence, explaining symbolism and abstract ideas with increasing depth of understanding.
- 9.12** They will be able to research independently, using a wider range of sources.
- 9.13** Pupils will increasingly recognise that some questions do not have answers or could have a range of answers, depending on beliefs and life experience.

### Impact: Breadth of learning experiences across the whole key stage

**9.14** The RE units for this key stage have been chosen so that they:

- identify key aspects of the Christian religion that are appropriate to explore across this key stage
- include thematic units. That is, units that draw material from a range of religious traditions and human experiences
- enable schools to draw on a range of resources, including people and communities in Sutton
- draw from one Big philosophical question for each year group.

**9.15** The support materials provide the following information about each of the RE units:

- the title of the unit (in the form of a question)
- a brief description of what should be covered
- the prior learning that the unit draws on
- future learning that the unit contributes to
- key vocabulary and concepts
- learning opportunities outside of the classroom
- a sequence of questions which provide a structure for the unit.



Support material has been written for each of the units in Key Stage Two. Specific to each unit is an assessment task, matched to the appropriate steps for progress ensuring teachers can measure pupil progress in RE/religion and worldviews in a variety of ways.

**9.16** Whilst following the requirements of the agreed syllabus, teachers should apply their professional judgement in adapting or developing the units of work. They may choose, for example:

- to teach a unit across several year groups, when their classes consist of pupils drawn from different years
- to tailor content and activities to draw upon the family backgrounds of their pupils, but without losing a unit's character.





## SECTION 10

# RE/Religion and Worldviews at Key Stage 3 (School years 7-9, pupils aged 11 to 14)

### Intent: Statutory requirements

**10.1** RE/religion and worldviews is a statutory requirement for students during Years 7, 8 and 9. This agreed syllabus requires that each school design a scheme of work for RE at Key Stage 3 which meets the requirements listed below, ensuring that pupils are provided with 45 hours of RE each year in this key stage.

**10.2** A programme of study for Key Stage 3 should:

- Begin with a 'introductory unit' which is related to the local religious traditions and marks a transition in RE between the primary and secondary phases.
- Involve students in a thorough investigation of the Christian tradition
- Involve students in an investigation of at least four other religious tradition, whether a major tradition (e.g. Hindu Dharmic religion, Islam or Sikhi), a group within major tradition (e.g. Roman Catholic, Sai Baba movement, Muslim Sufi tradition) or a minority tradition (e.g. Jain, Baha'i or Rastafarian)
- Involve students in an investigation of secular/non-religious world views (e.g. atheist, humanist)
- Engage students in an exploration of philosophical, theological and ethical issues through exploration of six key themes (Ideas about humanity, Ideas about God, Ideas about sacred time and space, Ideas about journeying, Ideas about religion in the modern world, Ideas about making moral decisions);
- Include assessment tasks which enable students by the end of the key stage to respond creatively to the question 'What might it mean for a person to belong to this/these religious/worldview traditions today?'
- Provide an opportunity for students to reflect on their own religious/worldview alongside human experience.


Teachers should refer to the guidance material for examples of programmes of study and schemes of work, available on the Sutton agreed syllabus shared drive.

### Implementation: What is distinctive about Key Stage 3?

**10.3** Key Stage 3 is characterised by expanding horizons. Beginning at a new and larger school and having a changed status will stimulate students to reflect on such aspects of life as continuity and change, sameness and difference, simplicity and complexity. This Key Stage will be marked by exploring pattern and diversity within and between religious traditions as well as within human experience in general.

**10.4** At this stage of rapid physical and emotional development, students are likely to be concerned about, and have growing insights into issues relating to self-worth, identity and relationships. This should provide a context in which to engage students in an exploration of issues such as identity and belonging as reflected in a range of religious and secular traditions.

**10.5** Students should be developing the ability to understand different viewpoints, to be objective and to use abstract language. Increasingly, they should be demonstrating a depth of understanding in their use of RE/religion and worldviews specific language.



**10.6** They will be developing the ability to evaluate religious and secular views on a range of issues, being able to examine and explain how beliefs, values and teachings influence the behaviour of individuals, communities and society. By the end of the Key Stage, they should be able to explain what it might mean for a person to belong to a religion/worldview tradition in the twenty-first century.

**Impact: Breadth of learning experiences across the Key Stage**

**10.7** The programme of study for Key Stage 3 should:

- involve students in the processes of knowing and understanding, and expressing and communicating ideas about religions and worldviews
- build on but also challenge and extend what students already know, understand and can do
- enable students to learn more about the nature and significance of religious and worldviews in society
- provide students with the opportunity to learn more about themselves and others, drawing upon religious and worldviews represented in the school and beyond
- have a local and global dimension, taking due note of diversity both within and between different religious and worldview traditions
- draw from the creative and imaginative as well as the more rational and intellectual aspects of experience
- provide students with compelling learning opportunities in RE (<http://www.natre.org.uk/secondary/good-learning-in-re-films/>)
- provide opportunities for cross curricular linkage of RE to other areas of the curriculum
- build upon cross curricular skills in their RE studies, e.g. becoming critical thinkers, independent enquirers, develop decision making capabilities, team workers and effective participants
- include the opportunity to visit places of interest (such as religious centres) as well as meeting and engaging with visitors from a variety of traditions.

**10.8** The study of any one religious or secular tradition in the Key Stage would include,

**The process of learning about and understanding religion and worldviews:**

- focuses on those strands or aspects of religion and human experience that seeks to understand beliefs, teaching and sources, practices and ways of life and forms of expression
- consists of more than information-gathering in that it includes identifying the underlying concepts and themes
- enables pupils to engage with the material through developing a range of identifiable skills.

**The process of expressing and communicating ideas about religion and worldviews:**

- encourages pupils to make links between their learning about and their own personal experiences through identity and belonging, meaning, purpose and truth and values and commitments
- enables pupils to develop their thinking about their own and others' experiences so that they are enabled to develop in their thinking about their own experiences in life, as they compare their experiences with those of others
- encourages pupils to express their responses in a range of forms and styles (representational, symbolic etc),
- encourages pupils to be sensitive to a range of human responses that might differ from their own.

**The process of gaining and deploying skills needed for the study of religion and worldviews**

- encourages pupils to use higher order skills in their work and think creatively and deeply about religion and worldviews,
- enables pupils to make links between other areas of the curriculum.



**10.9** The support materials with this agreed syllabus provide the following information about each of the RE/religion and worldviews units:

- the title of the unit (in the form of a question)
- a brief description of what should be covered
- the prior learning that the unit draws on
- future learning that the unit contributes to
- key vocabulary and concepts
- learning opportunities outside of the classroom
- a sequence of questions which provide a structure for the unit.



Support material has been written for 20 different units in Key Stage 3. Specific to each unit is an assessment task matched to appropriate steps for progress ensuring teachers can measure pupil progress in RE/religion and worldviews in a variety of ways.





## SECTION 11

# RE/Religion and Worldviews at Key Stage 4 (School years 10-11, pupils aged 14-16)

### Intent: Statutory requirements

**11.1** RE/religions and worldviews is a statutory requirement for pupils during Years 10 and 11. This agreed syllabus requires that each school provide a course of study in RE for all pupils in each year group.

**11.2** Schools might achieve this by enabling students to follow a publicly accredited course in Religious Education/Studies, such as GCSE short or full course.

**11.3** Alternatively, a school might wish to design their own courses of study, which must meet the following criteria:

- the course must be studied in clearly discernible units in the curriculum of both Years 10 and 11.
- The course must be planned in units which follow the approach to RE/religion and worldviews set out in this document
- At least six units must be studied at Key Stage 4. Each unit should take about 6 hours of curriculum time.
- A unit might consist of either a series of taught activities or an event (such as a conference or visit) which takes an equivalent amount of time.
- Units must include exploration of material drawn from Christianity and some or all of the other principal religious traditions and worldviews.
- Units must encourage students to respond by way of analysis, reflection and synthesis, evaluation, and by drawing on their own experiences.

### Implementation: What is distinctive about Key Stage 4?

**11.4** Students of this age group will exhibit a wide range of abilities, aptitudes, approaches and interests.

**11.5** Students will be developing a firmer perception of their own identity - including the influence of family and cultural background - and that of others. They will often be aware of a range of sometimes competing pressures - from peer group, school, family and the wider community. There will sometimes be a tension between the individual's wish for greater independence and the need for the acceptance and support of others.

**11.6** This is a time when students should be able to explore and debate the phenomenon of religion and worldviews in a wider context, using increasingly sophisticated language, including such issues as:

- the effect of religion on individuals, communities and society
- the various views about religion found in society, including specifically anti-religious standpoints
- the effect of the media on people's values, attitudes and beliefs
- the challenges and demands of living in a multi-religious, multicultural, and multi-lingual community such as that found in Sutton.

### Impact: Breadth of study across the key stage



**11.7** If a school decides to design its own RE/religion and worldviews course for students at this key stage, it might wish to focus material on:

- religious and ethical issues
- an exploration of the nature of religion and belief in contemporary society (eg inter-faith dialogue; other responses to life such as Humanism; the representation of religion in the media)
- specific religious traditions or groups, which need not be confined to the six principal religions, but which might be represented by students or adults associated with the school (e.g., the Baha'i, Jain, Parsee [Zoroastrian], Rastafarian or Sathya Baba traditions).

### Key questions

**11.8** The following key questions are suggested as providing a basis for exploration and response into units of work suitable for key stage 4:

• **Is life a journey?**

issues of change in the human lifecycle

• **What is worth celebrating?**

issues concerning the value and purpose of celebration

• **Does it matter whether it really happened?**

issues concerning historicity in relation to belief

• **What does it mean to be successful?**

issues concerning wealth and responsibility

• **Why be good?**

issues concerning morality and doing good

• **Are men and women equal?**

issues concerning the role and status of men and women

• **Is there life beyond death?**

issues connected with death and belief in resurrection and reincarnation

• **Whose world is it anyway?**

issues concerning the environment

• **But why?**

issues concerning the existence of suffering

• **Whose body is it anyway?**

issues relating to alcohol and other drugs





- **Who are we? Who are you?**

issues concerning identity and prejudice

- **What does it mean to be free?**

the idea that service to others is the key to freedom

- **Why this path? Why this road?**

the life and beliefs of local, national or international person/s

- **What's the message?**

exploration of how the arts portray religious ideas

- **Why bother?**

exploration of the origin and purpose of local, national or international charitable organisations

- **Whose life is it anyway?**

exploration of issues concerning dying and the taking of life

- **Why should I?**

exploration of issues concerning obedience to the law

- **Is there a God?**

exploration of issues concerning belief in God and non-belief in God

- **What is truth?**

issues of the meaning and claims of truth(s)





## SECTION 12

# RE/Religion and Worldviews at 16-19 and beyond

### Intent: Statutory requirements

**12.1** RE/religion and worldviews is a statutory requirement for students attending school up to and including the age of 19.

**12.2** In order to be deemed to be meeting statutory requirements for RE, Sutton schools with 16-19 facilities should ensure that students have participated in at least one activity from each of the following groups, A and B, during their post-16 education at school:

#### Group A activities

- A1.** A GCSE (short or long) course in Religious Education or Religious Studies.
- A2.** A GCE (AS or A level) course in Religious Studies.
- A3.** A GCE (AS or A level) course in General Studies which includes a study of religious and/or ethical issues.
- A4.** Any other publicly accredited course which includes a study of religious and/or ethical issues.
- A5.** An RE unit of study, devised by the school, of at least six hours duration in total.

#### Group B activities

- B1.** A half-day or whole-day course or conference with an RE/religion and worldviews - related theme.
- B2.** An activity with an RE/religion and worldviews - related theme which takes place away from school.
- B3.** The creation of material which contributes to the individual's ongoing exploration of his or her identity, with particular reference to beliefs, attitudes and values.
- B4.** The creation of material which contributes to the ongoing exploration of the place of religion and belief in the life of the Sutton community and its members.


This will ensure that schools:

- fulfil the aims outlined earlier in the syllabus encourage pupils to continue developing a sense of self, their community and the world beyond,
- an example of effective lifelong learning among young people is given through this syllabus.

### Implementation: What is distinctive about the post-16 stage of schooling?

**12.3** The post 16 stage of schooling is usually marked by a number of changes in the stance of students, both towards themselves and towards the world around them. Students are often given more personal freedom through which they are able to explore and respond to their identity as individuals.

**12.4** This is also a time of considerable pressure for many students when decisions need to be made about their futures. The key stage is usually characterised by more time given to independent research, reasoning and reflection. This is usually a time when students are becoming more aware of themselves as individuals and of their capacity to state views and opinions. The careful articulation of personal views or opinions, often in a public context, can be a source of personal



satisfaction. Labels to describe one's own personal stance - such as believer, humanist and atheist - are often appealing.

**12.5** There is often a ready engagement with big issues such as those relating to the nature and workings of society or to the environment. Students usually enjoy engaging in conversation, discussion and argument.

**12.6** Relationships are usually very significant for students of this age. Some relationships are very deep, and links might be formed which carry on for many years.

**12.7** Relationships with teachers and other significant adults often undergo a subtle change. Students realise that such people are individuals in their own right and that, within the right context, disagreement can be life enhancing.

### **Impact: Devising imaginative forms of provision**

**12.8** In order to meet legislative requirements, this agreed syllabus encourages schools to devise imaginative forms of provision which:

- are consistent with the approach to RE/religion and worldviews set out in this document
- build on the RE/religion and worldviews experiences of students in previous stages of their schooling
- are tailored to meet the needs of the students at the particular school they attend
- enrich the lives and learning experiences of students
- contribute to the creation of a broad and balanced curriculum
- contribute to the development of key skills
- create and develop links with individuals, groups and communities - local, national and international - outside the school
- make full use of the opportunities afforded by information and communication technology (ICT)
- make use of opportunities to develop debate and use of philosophical argument.

**12.9** Examples of the kinds of activity which could be developed to meet requirements are:

- a whole-day conference on the theme of 'Suffering' or 'Religion Today' which includes the opportunity for members of a number of faith communities to meet with small groups of students (B1)
- a multi-faith coach tour involving visits to a number of religious centres at each of which students are able to meet members of the community and to share ideas and views of life as well as learning about what takes place at the centre (B2)
- an opportunity for a group of students to spend several days at a religious centre, such as a Buddhist or Christian Monastery, or retreat centre (B2)
- students preparing a personal statement (including beliefs, attitudes and values, religious and non-religious) about themselves, using a chosen medium or combination of media, such as: photographs, prose, poetry, two or three-dimensional art, and music. Some of the personal statements could then be displayed and/or presented to others (B3)
- students, singly or in groups, engaging in an exploration of the impact of the various religious groups on Sutton's life and culture. The results of this exploration could be exhibited (at school or elsewhere), linked to a school event (such as multi-cultural evening), published (as an article in a school, local or national publication), or used as an RE/religion and worldviews resource by others in the school, including younger students (B4).

### **RE/Religion and Worldviews and lifelong learning**

**12.10** This agreed syllabus stands as part of Sutton's commitment to lifelong learning.





**12.11** It is hoped that a lifelong interest in exploring and responding to religion and human experience will be encouraged amongst pupils by:

- fostering a love of learning
- developing the skills of how to learn and understand others
- becoming a religious literate member of society
- tolerating people's views that are different from their own,
- promoting achievement and pride in their work in RE/religion and worldviews.

**12.12** When they support young people in their study of RE/religion and worldviews, it is hoped that parents and carers will have their own interest in religion and human experience deepened, rekindled or sparked.

**12.13** It is also hoped that the local community in Sutton will partner with schools, supporting them in their striving to create a well-informed, relevant and challenging form of RE/religion and worldviews for all our pupils.



# Appendix A




## Summary

1. Religious Education (RE)/religion and worldviews is part of the curriculum that all schools must provide for pupils 4 to 19.
2. In contrast to other subjects in the curriculum, where there are national programmes of study, the programme for RE/religion and worldviews in each local authority (LA) is locally agreed. The document in which each LA sets out the RE/religion and worldviews programme for its schools is called a 'local agreed syllabus for religious education'.
3. In Sutton, the local agreed syllabus must be followed by all community and foundation schools. (Faith-based schools have their own separate RE programmes). Academies and free schools under their funding agreement must either create their own syllabus for RE or can adopt an Agreed Syllabus. It is hoped that schools in Sutton will always want to adopt our agreed syllabus due to its high quality.
4. The title of the Sutton local agreed syllabus is Exploring Beliefs, Celebrating Diversity. It is called this because RE/religion and worldviews gives children and young people the opportunity to:
  - A) Learning about religion and worldviews
  - B) Expressing and communicating ideas about religion and worldviews
  - C) Gaining and deploying skills needed for the study of religion and worldviews.

RE/religion and worldviews also provides an opportunity for children and young people to understand each other's beliefs, practices and ways of life. Our aim is for all Sutton pupils to have a high degree of religious literacy, with the ability to appreciate difference and diversity, respecting everyone that they meet, work with and live alongside.

5. RE/religion and worldviews makes a valuable contribution to the personal development of children and young people, particularly their spiritual, moral, social, cultural and intellectual development.
6. RE/religion and worldviews contributes to the development of all children and young people, regardless of whether they come from a religious family background or not. In the rare case that parents or carers do not want their child to take part in RE, they have the right to withdraw their child. The Sutton programme of study has been agreed by local councillors, teachers, faith and worldview leaders from our communities in order to ensure that the syllabus would work for all.
7. Alongside all other aspects of school life, RE/religion and worldviews should make a contribution to develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow pupils to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain.
8. In order to provide challenge and to identify the progress that children and young people make in RE/religion and worldviews, the agreed syllabus suggests that, when appropriate, 'steps to progress' are used to chart progress in each of three areas of the subject:
  - A) learning about religion and worldviews
  - B) expressing and communicating ideas about religion and worldviews
  - C) gaining and deploying skills needed for the study of religion and worldviews.



9. In the Early Years Foundation Stage (ages 3 to 5); the agreed syllabus suggests that the school experience of young children includes a range of RE/religion and worldviews - related activities that follow three themes:

- Celebrating special times
- Stories and what they tell us
- Aspects of identity and relationships.

10. At Key Stage 1 (ages 5 to 7), the agreed syllabus requires that schools 'reflect that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions presented in Great Britain' (The Education Act 1996).

This agreed syllabus expects schools as a minimum to provide opportunities for pupils to be taught about Christianity, at least one other principal religion, a religious community with a significant local presence and where appropriate a secular worldview.

In Year 1 the big question is **'What does it mean to belong?'** investigating the relation between religion and belonging throughout the year. In Year 2 it is **'What can we learn from special stories?'** investigating the relationship between religious stories and action. There are a minimum of 12 support units written by practicing teachers that schools can use to support RE teaching in their school.

11. At Key Stage 2 (ages 7 to 11), the agreed syllabus requires that schools include six RE units in each year. This agreed syllabus expects schools as a minimum to provide opportunities for pupils to be taught about Christianity, at least one other principal religion, a religious community with a significant local presence and where appropriate a secular world view.

In Year 3 the big question is **'How are symbols and sayings important in religion?'** - Investigating how symbols and sayings are used within religion and worldviews to encapsulate important teachings, beliefs or practices.

In Year 4 the big question is **'What is important to the people in my local community?'**- Investigating how religion and worldviews are important to the pupil's local community.

In Year 5 the big question is **'What impact do beliefs have on actions?'**- Investigating the relationship between beliefs and practices, how organised and personal worldviews are created and operate.

In Year 6 the big question is **'How important are the similarities and differences between and within religions?'** - Investigating the relationship between and within religions and worldviews, considering what religion and worldviews share and differ over, evaluating the importance of these similarities and differences within and between religion and worldviews.

There is a minimum of 24 support units written by practicing teachers that schools can use to support RE teaching in their school.

12. At Key Stage 3 (ages 11 to 14), the agreed syllabus requires that schools design schemes of work that:

- begins with a unit that bridges the transition between primary to secondary school
- involves students in a thorough investigation of the Christian tradition
- involves students in an investigation of at least one other principal religious tradition (i.e., Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, Jewish or Sikh)



- provides students with the opportunity to explore another religious tradition which should be either a minority religious tradition (e.g., Baha'ism or Rastafarianism) or a sub-set of a major religious tradition (e.g. the Roman Catholic tradition, Zen Buddhism)
- engages students in an exploration of philosophical, moral, theological and ethical issues
- includes opportunities to study secular world views
- includes assessment tasks which enable students by the end of the key stage to respond creatively to the question, 'What might it mean for a person to belong to this/these religious/secular traditions today?'

**13.** At Key Stage 4 (ages 14-16), the agreed syllabus requires that schools provide a course of study in RE for all pupils in each year group.

Schools might achieve this by enabling students to follow a publicly accredited course in Religious Education/Studies, such as GCSE short or full course. Alternatively, a school might wish to design their own courses of study, which must meet the following criteria:

- the course must be studied in clearly discernible units in the curriculum of both Years 10 and 11
- at least six units must be studied at Key Stage 4: Each unit should take about 6 hours of curriculum time
- a unit might consist of either a series of taught activities or an event (such as a conference or visit) which takes an equivalent amount of time
- units must include exploration of material drawn from Christianity and some or all of the other principal religious traditions and world views
- units must encourage students to respond by way of analysis, reflection and synthesis, evaluation, and by drawing on their own experiences.

**14.** For students in their post-16 stage of secondary education (ages 16-19), the agreed syllabus requires that schools fulfil the aims outlined earlier in the syllabus to encourage pupils to continue developing a sense of self, their community and the world beyond.





# Appendix B

## B Progress in Religious Education

**B1** Diagram for steps of progression for RE

**B2** The steps to progression expressed in simplified terms in order to explain to pupils what they need to do to achieve at a higher level

**B3** National P scales for RE

**B1:** Aims in RE: a progression grid

LEARN ABOUT AND UNDERSTAND:	AT THE END OF KEY STAGE 1 PUPILS WILL BE ABLE TO:	AT THE END OF KEY STAGE 2 PUPILS WILL BE ABLE TO:	AT THE END OF KEY STAGE 3 PUPILS WILL BE ABLE TO:
A1. Describe, explain and analyse beliefs, and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities.	Recall and name different beliefs and practices, including festivals, worship, rituals and ways of life, in order to find out about the meanings behind them.	Describe and make connections between different features of the religions and worldviews they study, discovering more about celebrations, worship, pilgrimages and the rituals which mark important points in life, in order to reflect on their ideas.	Explain and interpret ways that the history and culture of religions and worldviews influence individuals and communities, including a wide range of beliefs and practices, in order to appraise reasons why some people support and others question these influences.
A2. Identify, investigate and respond to questions posed by, and responses offered by, some of the sources of wisdom found in religions and worldviews.	Retell and suggest meanings to some religious and moral stories, exploring and discussing sacred writings and sources of wisdom and recognising the communities from which they come.	Describe and understand links between stories and other aspects of the communities they are investigating, responding thoughtfully to a range of sources of wisdom and to beliefs and teachings that arise from them in different communities.	Explain and interpret a range of beliefs, teachings and sources of wisdom and authority in order to understand religions and worldviews as coherent systems or ways of seeing the world.
A3. Appreciate and appraise the nature, significance and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.	Recognise some different symbols and actions which express a community's way of life, appreciating some similarities between communities.	Explore and describe a range of beliefs, symbols and actions so that they can understand different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.	Explain how and why individuals and communities express the meanings of their beliefs and values in any, different forms and ways of living, enquiring into the variety, differences and relationships that exist within and between them.



**B2** The steps to progression expressed in simplified terms in order to explain to pupils what they need to do to achieve at a higher level

<b>EXPRESS AND COMMUNICATE</b>	<b>AT THE END OF KEY STAGE 1 PUPILS WILL BE ABLE TO:</b>	<b>AT THE END OF KEY STAGE 2 PUPILS WILL BE ABLE TO:</b>	<b>AT THE END OF KEY STAGE 3 PUPILS WILL BE ABLE TO:</b>
B1. Explain reasonably their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities.	Ask and respond to questions about what communities do, and why, so that they can identify what difference belonging to a community might make.	Observe and understand varied examples of religions and worldviews so that they can explain, with reasons, their meanings and significance to individuals and communities.	Explain the religions and worldviews which they encounter clearly, reasonable and coherently; evaluate them, drawing on a range of introductory level approaches recognised in the study of religions or theology.
B2. Express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value.	Observe and recount different ways of expressing identity and belonging, responding sensitively for themselves.	Understand the challenges of commitment to a community of faith or belief, suggesting why belonging to a community may be valuable, both in the diverse communities being studied and in their own lives.	Observe and interpret a wide range of ways in which commitment and identity are expressed. They develop insightful evaluation and analysis of controversies about commitment to religions and worldviews, accounting for the impact of diversity within and between communities.
B3. Appreciate and appraise varied dimensions of religion.	Recognise some different symbols and actions which express a community's way of life, appreciating some similarities between communities.	Observe and consider different dimensions of religion, so that they can explore and show understanding of similarities and differences between different religions and worldviews.	Consider and evaluate the questions: What is religion? Analyse the nature of religion using the main disciplines by which religion is studied.

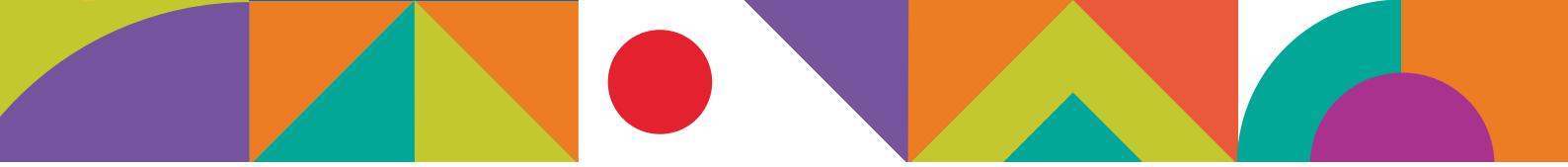
The RE programme of study usually refers to 'religions and worldviews' to describe the field of enquiry. Here the aim is to consider religion and belief itself as a phenomenon which has both positive and negative features, and is open to many interpretations; in this aspect of the aims, pupils are to engage with the concept of religion and non-religious belief, not merely with individual examples, and similar critiques should apply to both.



The content in aims A and B will be the vehicle through which the skills in aim C will be developed.

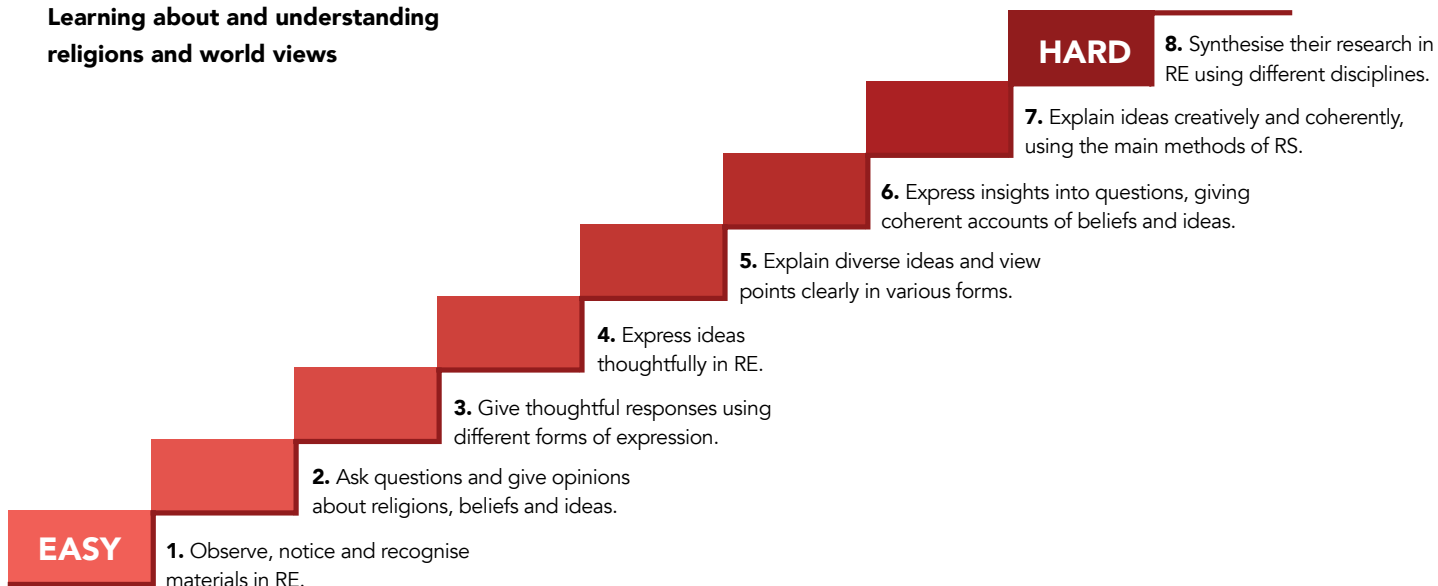
<b>GAIN AND DEPLOY SKILLS</b>	<b>AT THE END OF KEY STAGE 1 PUPILS WILL BE ABLE TO:</b>	<b>AT THE END OF KEY STAGE 2 PUPILS WILL BE ABLE TO:</b>	<b>AT THE END OF KEY STAGE 3 PUPILS WILL BE ABLE TO:</b>
Find out about and investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding creatively.	Explore questions about belonging, meaning and truth so that they can express their own ideas and opinions in response using words, music, art or poetry.	Discuss and present their own and others' views on challenging questions about belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, applying ideas of their own thoughtfully in different forms including reasoning, music, art and poetry.	Explore some of the ultimate questions that are raised by human life in which ways that are well-informed and which invite reasoned personal responses, expressing insights that draw on a wide range of examples including the arts, media and philosophy.
Enquire into what enables different communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all.	Find out about and respond with ideas to examples of cooperation between people who are different.	Consider and apply ideas about ways in which diverse communities can live together for the wellbeing of all, responding thoughtfully to community, values and respect.	Examine and evaluate issues about community cohesion and respect for all in the light of different perspectives from varied religions and worldviews.
Articulate beliefs, values and commitments clearly in order explain reasons why they may be important in their own and other people's lives.	Find out about questions of right and wrong and begin to express their ideas and opinions in responses.	Discuss and apply their own and others' ideas about ethical questions, including idea about what is right and wrong and what is just and fair, and express their own clearly in response.	Explore and express insights into significant moral and ethical questions posed by being human in ways that are well-informed and which invite personal response, using reasoning which may draw on a range of examples from real life, fiction or other forms of media.



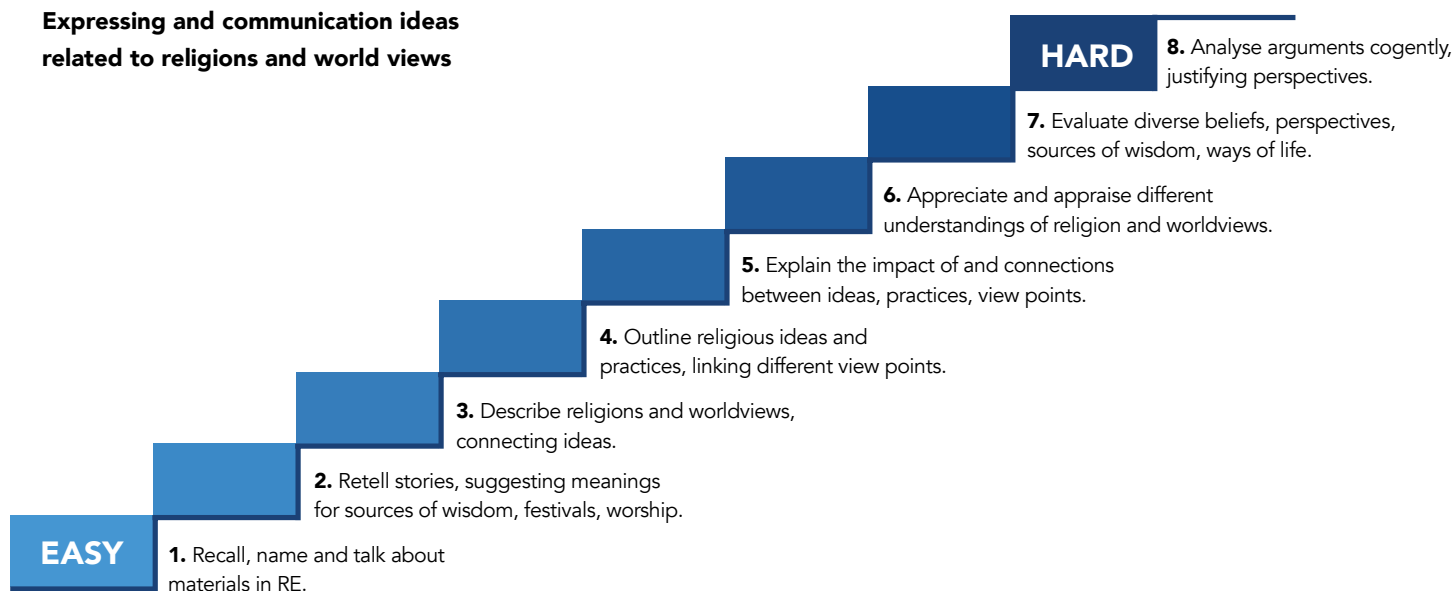


## B.2 Eight steps in relation to the three elements of the aim of RE

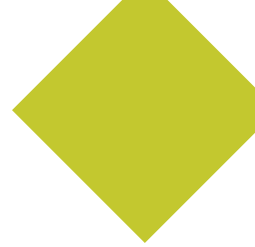
### Learning about and understanding religions and world views



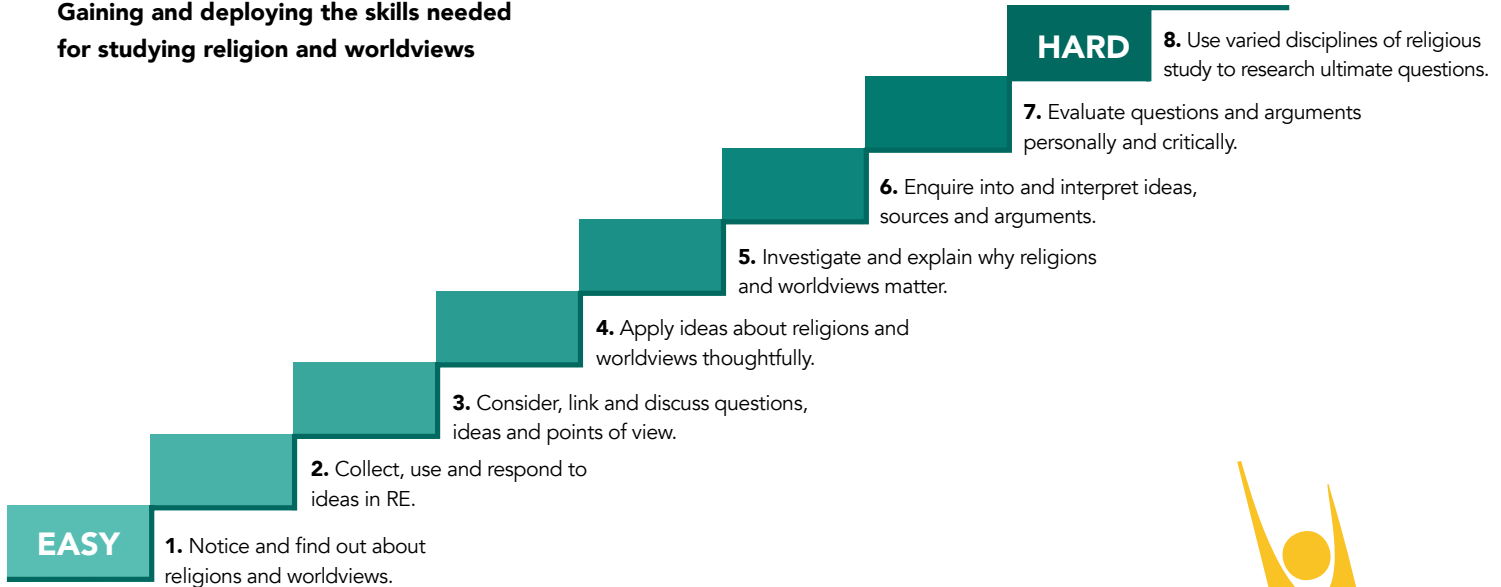
### Expressing and communication ideas related to religions and world views







## Gaining and deploying the skills needed for studying religion and worldviews



### B3: SUTTON PRE-8-STEP DESCRIPTORS FOR RE

#### Performance descriptions for subjects

The performance descriptions for P1 to P3 are common across all subjects. They outline the types and range of general performance that some pupils with learning difficulties might characteristically demonstrate. Subject-focussed examples are included to illustrate some of the ways in which staff might identify attainment in different subject contexts. These are to be used by teachers when pupils are below the steps for progression for children with learning difficulties.

Level	Description
P1(i)	Pupils encounter activities and experiences. They may be passive or resistant. They may show simple reflex responses, for example, startling at sudden noises or movements. Any participation is fully prompted.
P1(ii)	Pupils show emerging awareness of activities and experiences. They may have periods when they appear alert and ready to focus their attention on certain people, events, objects or parts of objects, for example, becoming still in response to silence. They may give intermittent reactions, for example, vocalising occasionally during group celebrations and acts of worship.
P2(i)	Pupils begin to respond consistently to familiar people, events and objects. They react to new activities and experiences, for example, briefly looking around in unfamiliar natural and manmade environments. They begin to show interest in people, events and objects, for example, leaning towards the source of a light, sound or scent. They accept and engage in coactive exploration, for example, touching a range of religious artefacts and found objects in partnership with a member of staff.
P2(ii)	Pupils begin to be proactive in their interactions. They communicate consistent preferences and affective responses, for example, showing that they have enjoyed an experience or interaction. They recognise familiar people, events and objects, for example, becoming quiet and attentive during a certain piece of music. They perform actions, often by trial and improvement, and they remember learned responses over short periods of time, for example, repeating a simple action with an artefact. They cooperate with shared exploration and supported participation, for example, performing gestures during ritual exchanges with another person performing gestures.
P3(i)	Pupils begin to communicate intentionally. They seek attention through eye contact, gesture or action. They request events or activities, for example, prompting a visitor to prolong an interaction. They participate in shared activities with less support. They sustain concentration for short periods. They explore materials in increasingly complex ways, for example, stroking or shaking artefacts or found objects. They observe the results of their own actions with interest, for example, when vocalising in a quiet place. They remember learned responses over more extended periods, for example, following a familiar ritual and responding appropriately.



P3(ii)	Pupils use emerging conventional communication. They greet known people and may initiate interactions and activities, for example, prompting an adult to sing or play a favourite song. They can remember learned responses over increasing periods of time and may anticipate known events, for example, celebrating the achievements of their peers in assembly. They may respond to options and choices with actions or gestures, for example, choosing to participate in activities. They actively explore objects and events for more extended periods, for example, contemplating the flickering of a candle flame. They apply potential solutions systematically to problems, for example, passing an artefact to a peer in order to prompt participation in a group activity.
P4	Pupils use single elements of communication, for example, words, gestures, signs or symbols, to express their feelings. They show they understand 'yes' and 'no'. They begin to respond to the feelings of others, for example, matching their emotions and laughing when another pupil is laughing. They join in with activities by initiating ritual actions or sounds. They may demonstrate an appreciation of stillness and quietness.
P5	Pupils respond appropriately to simple questions about familiar religious events or experiences and communicate simple meanings. They respond to a variety of new religious experiences, for example, involving music, drama, colour, lights, food, or tactile objects. They take part in activities involving two or three other learners. They may also engage in moments of individual reflection.
P6	Pupils express and communicate their feelings in different ways. They respond to others in group situations and cooperate when working in small groups. Pupils listen to, and begin to respond to, familiar religious stories, poems and music, and make their own contribution to celebrations and festivals. They carry out ritualised actions in familiar circumstances. They show concern and sympathy for others in distress, for example, through gestures, facial expressions or by offering comfort. They start to be aware of their own influence on events and other people.
P7	Pupils listen to and follow religious stories. They communicate their ideas about religion, life events and experiences in simple phrases. They evaluate their own work and behaviour in simple ways, beginning to identify some actions as right or wrong on the basis of the consequences. They find out about aspects of religion through stories, music or drama, answer questions and communicate their responses. They may communicate their feelings about what is special to them, for example, using role play. They begin to understand that other people have needs and to respect these. They make purposeful relationships with others in group activity.
P8	Pupils listen attentively to religious stories or to people talking about religion. They begin to understand that religious and other stories carry moral and religious meaning. They are increasingly able to communicate ideas, feelings or responses to experiences or to retell religious stories. They communicate simple facts about religion and important people in religions. They begin to realise the significance of religious artefacts, symbols and places. They reflect on what makes them happy, sad, excited or lonely. They demonstrate a basic understanding of what is right and wrong in familiar situations. They are often sensitive to the needs and feelings of others and show respect for themselves and others. They treat living things and their environment with care and concern.





# Appendix C

## C1 EYFS Sutton AS units

### Celebrating Special Times

- What happens at Christmas?
- What happens at Diwali?
- What happens at Easter?
- What happens at Eid-UI-Fitr?
- What happens at Eid-UI-Adha?
- What happens on Guru Nanak's Birthday?
- What happens at Sukkot?
- What happens at Passover?
- What happens on Buddha day?

### Aspects of identity and relationships

- What is special about being a Muslim person?
- In the story of 'The donkey and the tiger skin' what is the special message?
- What makes a place special?
- What can be learn about Christians from visiting a church?
- What is special about being a Hindu person?

### Stories and what they tell us

- What does 'The Lost Coin' story tell Christians?
- What does 'Muhammad and the Kitten' story tell us about Muslims?
- What does 'The Good Samaritan' story tell Christians?
- What does 'Gifts for the poor' story tell Buddhists?
- What does 'The gift of friendship' story tell Muslims?
- What does 'The lost sheep' story tell Christians?
- What does 'The hare and tortoise' story tell Humanists?
- What does 'The two brothers' story tell Humanists?



## C2 Sutton Primary AS Units

In Year 1 the big question is **'What does it mean to belong?'** Investigating the relation between religion, worldviews and believing/belonging.

### Year 1 smaller unit questions are:

- Why do Christians celebrate Christmas?
- What does it mean to belong to Islam?
- What does it mean to belong to Christianity?
- What can be special about living with family and friends? All religions and world views
- What does it mean to belong to Hinduism/Hindu Dharmic religion? OR What does it mean to belong to Sikhism/Sikhi?
- What does it mean to be non-religions/ Humanist?



In Year 2 it is **'What can we learn from special stories?'** Investigating the relationship between religious/worldview stories and actions.

**Year 2 smaller unit questions are:**

- Where did the world come from and how should we look after it? All religions and world views
- Why did Jesus tell stories?
- Why are different books special for different people? Christianity and two other religions and worldviews
- How do we know that Easter is coming? What special story is told at Easter?
- How does special food and fasting help people in their faith? All religions and worldviews
- Choice between two units: A) Be who you are! OR B) How can we live in peace? Both units include all religions and worldviews

In Year 3 the big question is **'How are symbols and sayings important in religion?'** Investigating how symbols and sayings are used within religion and worldviews to encapsulate important teachings, beliefs or practices.

**Year 3 smaller unit questions are:**

- How do Jews celebrate their beliefs at home and in the Synagogue?
- What can we learn about special symbols and signs used in religions? Christianity, Islam and secular worldviews
- How did Jesus and Buddha make people stop and think?
- How and why do Hindus celebrate Holi? What celebration can we design to mark a special time in our class or year group?
- What do Sikhi sayings tell us about Sikhi beliefs?
- What is the significance of light in religion? Christian, Jewish and Hindu people

In Year 4 the big question is **'What is important to the people in my local community?'** Investigating how religion and worldviews are important to the pupil's local community.

**Year 4 smaller unit questions are:**

- Why is Easter important to Christians?
- How and why do Hindu people worship at home and in the mandir?
- What religions and worldviews are represented in our neighbourhood? OR What makes me the person I am? All religions and worldviews
- Why is the Bible special for Christians?
- What is important to Humanists?
- What happens when someone gets married? All religions and worldviews

In Year 5 the big question is **'What impact do beliefs have on actions?'** Investigating the relationship between beliefs and practices, how organised and personal worldviews are created and operate.

**Year 5 smaller unit questions are:**

- How is Christmas celebrated around the world?
- How do Christians try to follow Jesus' example?
- What do religions believe about God? All religions and worldviews
- What inner forces affect how we think and behave? All religions and worldviews
- Why is Muhammad and the Qur'an important to Muslims?
- A choice between A) 'Thankfulness' unit or B) 'The Kites are flying - peace' unit both units cover all religions and worldviews



In Year 6 the big question is **'How important are the similarities and differences between and within religions?'**

Investigating the relationship between and within religions and worldviews? Investigating what religion and worldviews share and differ over, evaluating the importance of these similarities and differences within and between religion and worldviews.

**Year 6 smaller unit questions are:**

- What are the sources of the story about what happened on the first Easter Sunday?
- What do people believe about life after death? All religions and worldviews
- What qualities are important to present day religious leaders? All faiths – asking pupils to compare at least 3 different religious/worldview leaders
- How do people express their faith through the arts in Christianity?
- What similarities and differences do religions and worldviews share?
- How could we design a celebration that involved everyone, whether religious or not, in a meaningful and imaginative way? Kwanzaa - All religions and world views

**Appendix C3**

Sutton agreed syllabus provides a number of additional management supports for primary leads and heads of RE/religion and worldviews at secondary schools:

1. The big picture of how RE/religion and worldviews is organised in Sutton primary schools from EYFS to year 6
2. The big picture content for RE/religion and worldviews of knowledge, vocabulary, festivals and visits covered from EYFS to year 6 in Sutton
3. Pre/post learning documents for all primary schemes of work  
These documents provide schools with the opportunity to capture pupil learning in RE/religion and worldviews before they start a unit of study and at the end. It allows teachers to connect learning across and year group and between year groups in order to draw upon knowledge and understanding the pupils have already covered in their Sutton syllabus.
4. Knowledge organisers for all primary schemes of work  
These documents provide teachers and pupils with the key vocabulary of content knowledge for each unit of work. They also provide challenge activities for the most-able pupils.





# Appendix D

## Advise on requests to withdraw from RE/Religion and Worldview lessons

### Sutton's Sacre's advice on withdrawal: Policies and Responsibilities

#### RE and Withdrawal

(Please read in conjunction with DFES Circular 1/94)

These guidelines apply only to RE (not collective worship)

Text in standard type is from the 1/94 circular. *Text in italics is LA additional guidance.*

1. If a parent/carer asks that a pupil should be wholly excused from attending any RE in the school, then the school must comply. Parents are not obliged to give reasons for the withdrawal. 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. These arrangements will be made by the parents, the school is not expected to make these arrangements. *It is always good practice to meet with the parents/carers to discuss their concerns at the outset and ensure they understand the nature of RE/religion and worldviews in Sutton. In many cases, the parents will want their child to continue with their RE lessons once they understand the nature of RE is not to nurture certain views and see how expansive and inclusive our syllabus is. On some occasions, it is through a lack of understanding that withdrawal is requested by parents/carers, and discussion allows fears and misunderstandings to be addressed. Sutton SACRE are very happy to support schools with discussions with parents/carers around the nature of RE and why we would like all children to receive it here in Sutton. Religious leaders have worked very hard at thinking through the content of what we teach pupils and are happy that the content of what we do is appropriate for all pupils from their religions. Equally we have worked hard to ensure those families who do not have a religious belief would also feel our syllabus is worthwhile and inclusive of their views.*

*If parents want to pursue withdrawal from RE/religion and worldviews, it is our practice here in that they must write to the headteacher and governors to make this request. This request will then be discussed at the next governors meeting and a decision made about how the school will cover this request.*

*A historical note: Withdrawal from RE was given many years ago to parents and carers when RE was confessional in nature (before 1988). This allowed parents/carers to withdraw their children from receiving Bible based teaching from the local Christian priest. However, the nature of subject content of RE is now not confessional, but rather educational and broad. Therefore, no parents/carers should need to withdraw their child. Here in Sutton our agreed syllabus has been passed by teachers, councillors and religion and worldview representatives from all major different religions, as well as secular worldviews ensuring our curriculum is broad and inclusive.*

*SACRE appreciates the hard work of many Sutton schools in keeping pupils in RE.*

2. A pupil may, if the parent/carer requests this, be withdrawn from the school premises to receive RE elsewhere, so long as the Local Authority (LA) is satisfied that this will not interfere with the child's attendance at school other than at the beginning or end of any school session. If this is not possible and the parents wish their child to receive separate RE, the school is required to allow such education to take place in the school providing it does not have to meet the cost and the request is not unreasonable.



*These practical implications of withdrawal should be made clear to the parents/carers at a meeting, and the school should be clear about what is reasonable e.g. space, supervision, the parents need to organise their child's work for 1 hr a week in RE/ religion and worldviews time – the school does not organise what the child does in this time.*

**4.** If RE is taught as part of an integrated Humanities programme or in conjunction with other National Curriculum subjects, parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from the RE elements of these programmes.

**5.** When religious or spiritual matters come up in other areas of the curriculum – both planned and spontaneously - this does not constitute RE in the legal sense. Parents could not insist that their child be withdrawn every time such issues arise. *These issues are helping the child in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and this can be mentioned to parents.*

**6.** It is good practice to insert a line about this in your school prospectus/website, such as: 'RE is provided for all pupils and is inclusive and broad minded. Parents do have the right to withdraw pupils from RE: if you wish to do this, make an appointment with the head teacher / RE subject leader. The school does not support selective withdrawal from RE'.

*It is best practice for a school to have a withdrawal policy statement of procedures, so that all teachers are clear how to handle such a request or demand from a pupil or parent. In your copy of the Agreed Syllabus there is a list of who has been part of passing Sutton's agreed syllabus in appendix F2 and have given it their approval. This is a useful place to start in a discussion with parents, as sometimes once they understand what is going on in their child's RE lessons, and they find out it has been passed by their religious and worldviews leaders and most groups in Sutton, they are not so worried about their child receiving RE. It is important for teachers to know that a pupil cannot remove themselves from RE, and neither can parents until the request has gone to and be passed at a governor meeting formally. Schools are legally in loco parentis for pupils and withdrawal takes this legal requirement off the schools for RE.*

**7.** Finally, a child cannot be in for their religion in RE/religion and worldviews and out for all the others. Our practice in Sutton is that they are either withdrawn from everything or nothing. If the parents are choosing to withdraw their child it is often good to emphasise that this is a shame as it will mean they will not have the opportunity to talk about their own religion or worldview and how they 'do' things in their home or place of worship, the beliefs that are important to them and their family.

**8.** Historically requests for withdrawal often came from certain religious groups, for example Jehovah Witnesses. But now RE is not confessional in nature, many parents from groups such as these are happy for their children to learn about different religions and worldviews in RE.

**9.** Teachers may withdraw from the teaching of RE unless they have been specifically employed to teach or lead and manage RE or are a member of the senior leadership team. An application to withdraw must be given in writing to the head and chair of governors. Pupils must not miss out on RE teaching because a teacher has withdrawn from teaching RE. The school must make alternative provision for the pupils to be taught RE. *Sutton SACRE hopes that no teachers would feel the need to withdraw from the teaching of RE in Sutton as our curriculum is broad, balanced and takes account of people with very different views. It would hope that all teachers would be open to the challenge of the diversity of beliefs we find in our Sutton classrooms and like the philosophical questioning approach this syllabus takes from EYFS to KS5.*







# Appendix E

## Membership of Agreed Syllabus Conference & acknowledgements

### E1 Membership of Agreed Syllabus Conference

Ms Claire Ramalli (Advisor)

#### Committee A

Mrs Rosey Johnson (Christian)

Mr Vince Burke (Catholic)

Mrs Uzma Hussein (Muslim)

Mr Sal Uddin (Ahmadi Muslim)

Mr Abhinav Kant (Hindu)

Mr Paul Solomon (Jewish)

Mr Chris Lynch (Humanist)

#### Committee B

Mr Lewis Owens

Ms Kareen Hewitt

#### Committee C

Ms Veronica Stone (Chair)

Mr Simon Ellingham

Mrs Uzma Mobin

#### Committee D

Councillor Patrick Ogbonna



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**Big Ideas** and **Big Ideas in practice** by Barabara Wintersgill et al

**RE-searchers:** A critical dialogic approach to RE in primary schools by Professor Rob Freathy and Giles Freathy's work on RE-searchers

#### **Ofsted RE literature review & Ofsted Deep and meaningful RE report**

Religious Education Council and their materials on '**A Curriculum Framework for Religious Education in England**' and '**Commission Religious Education**' and '**National Content Standard for Religious Education**'







# Exploring beliefs and celebrating diversity

SUTTON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AGREED SYLLABUS 2026

