



# Wakefield Agreed Syllabus for RE 2007



## Contents

Foreword

Statutory guidance summary

Why RE matters

The purposes and aims of RE

Learning about religion and learning from religion: two attainment targets

Every Child Matters: how the five outcomes relate to RE

Curriculum time for RE

RE learning and the whole curriculum

- RE and community cohesion
- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development and RE
- Key skills
- Promoting other aspects of learning
- RE and the general teaching requirements: inclusion
- Attitudes, skills and processes for learning

Programmes of study:

■ Foundation stage – creative development, knowledge and understanding of the world, personal and social development, communication

■ Key Stage 1

■ Key Stage 2

■ Key Stage 3

■ 14-19

Assessment and achievement: eight levels for RE; P levels for inclusion

### Additional and extension material (non-statutory):

From Programme of Study to Scheme of Work: guidance

Assessment in RE: a set of eight levels of “I can...” statements

Six Religions: teaching ideas by religion and by key stage

Glossary of six religions

Learning styles and strategies

**These substantial support and guidance materials do not form part of the statutory syllabus, but they provide practical and classroom close support for teachers in setting high standards for RE.**

## Foreword

The Education Act 1996 states that the local education authority must review their locally agreed syllabus every five years. The last revision of the Agreed Syllabus for Wakefield took place in 2003 and built on previous good practice, serving pupils and schools well. The 2007 edition builds on current good practice in schools and colleges across the District and is intended to further develop the high quality of religious education provision in Wakefield.

The last ten years have seen significant changes in education and the revised Local Agreed Syllabus takes these changes into account. More recently, QCA has published a new 'National Framework for RE' with revised levels of attainment and schemes of work. Our revised version has taken cognisance of the advice and guidance of QCA.

The 2007 Local Agreed Syllabus for Wakefield includes: statutory requirements for religious education; teacher guidance in the form of exemplar units of work; useful appendices with 'I can' statements; appropriate religious content by religion and key stage; how to improve learning in religious education and a glossary of religious terms. The syllabus will enable teachers to focus on achievement in religious literacy in respect of learning about religion and also development of personal qualities and spirituality in terms of learning from religion. The Local Agreed Syllabus will enable teachers to build upon current good practice thereby ensuring continuity, progression and raising standards of achievement across the District.

The review of the Local Agreed Syllabus commenced in the summer 2007 when the Agreed Syllabus Conference was set up. Members of the local authority working group and SACRE have given their time, expertise and support generously during this review and the new syllabus could not have been produced without their effort and hard work. Indeed, the enthusiasm and commitment of all those who contributed to the review has resulted in the production of a Local Agreed Syllabus that will ensure the continuing good practice in religious education in Wakefield.

We would like to thank everyone who has been involved with the review. The publication of the Local Agreed Syllabus reinforces the importance that Wakefield gives to religious education and the special place it has within in the curriculum.

SACRE acknowledges the help of RE consultant Lat Blaylock of RE Today Professional Services. The guidance sections of the syllabus are copyright Wakefield SACRE and RE Today, and may not be reproduced in any form outside of Wakefield MDC schools without prior written permission.

**Cllr Hillary Mitchell**  
Chair of SACRE

**Elaine McHale**  
Corporate Director – Family Services

**"The best thing about RE is Noah and his ark."**

Y1 pupil

"In this new syllabus and its guidance papers, we have tried to provide up to date, accessible, practical, user-friendly guidance for setting high standards in RE. We hope you like it and use it."

Lat Blaylock, Adviser

**"Our best RE lesson was when Mrs Smith came and gave us hot crossed buns"**

Y1 pupil

"The best things about RE are stories about God and to learn about Jesus. I liked making prayers to God and writing them in cool styles and learning how many types of prayers there are."

KS2 pupil

**"RE is fun!"**

Y2 pupil

**"My favourite thing in RE was the video about Muslims and their black stone in Mecca"**

Y1 pupil

"What I would say to users of the syllabus is: don't be afraid of this work. It will give your children the opportunity to ask and think about the really important questions in life and it could be the most rewarding work you ever do and the most meaningful for them."

Freda Jackson, Adviser

**"We like RE because it helps you to understand different religions and we get to learn about things which are on the news and happen in the world today. We enjoy the discussions of issues that we have."**

KS3 pupils

"RE can play a key role in developing cross-curricular schemes and themes-look through the syllabus with your coordinator, see how easily it fits within with your current teaching and assessment planning and enjoy the opportunities for learning it brings. There is always help for teachers around in the Wakefield authority: the Primary AST is brilliant! Allocate some money for buying some key resources; children will be prepared for becoming more informed and understanding citizens for the rest of their lives.

Jane Gosney, Headteacher

## Summary: What schools must do

Religious education is a required subject of the curriculum for all pupils on school rolls. This includes pupils in Foundation Stage 2, and all in schools on 16-19 courses. The RE curriculum is legal if it is taught in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus, which is prepared by an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC). The conference includes representatives of teachers, the local authority, the Church of England and the religious communities of the area. The Agreed Syllabus for RE must be reviewed every five years.

This new Wakefield Agreed Syllabus replaces the syllabus of 2003. In schools where it applies, it must be implemented for September 2008.

### Continuity and change

This syllabus responds to recent developments in a number of areas:

- New Foundation Stage programmes are integrated;
- Assessment for learning is incorporated into the planning;
- The Department for Children, Schools and Families' (DCSF) non-statutory national framework for RE has been used to review and update the programmes of study;
- The eight-level scale has been reviewed and updated;
- The opportunities for RE to contribute to the outcomes of the 'Every Child Matters' framework are explained.

The overriding intention of the ASC has been to support the widespread quality of good RE teaching and learning Wakefield and to enable schools where standards are lower to implement change and develop the quality of RE provision.

Major new sections of non-statutory guidance on planning, teaching, learning and assessment, along with a comprehensive glossary of terms in six religions have been provided for teachers' use.

Governors and school leaders should take the opportunity to review provision of RE in the light of the syllabus. Where provision is good and standards are high, the new syllabus will support the subject. Where provision is weaker, the publication of the syllabus provides an opportunity to review and develop the subject.

### The mission of Wakefield MDC

To work with its partners to create a culture in which education is sought and valued; where high expectations of pupils and students and high standards of achievement become the norm; and where education promotes individual and community development and contributes to Wakefield's regeneration.

## The purposes of RE

RE provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, other religious traditions and other world views that offer answers to questions such as these. It offers opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development. It enhances pupils' awareness and understanding of religions and beliefs, teachings, practices and forms of expression, as well as of the influence of religion on individuals, families, communities and cultures.

RE encourages pupils to learn from different religions, beliefs, values and traditions while exploring their own beliefs and questions of meaning. It challenges pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses.

RE encourages pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging. It enables them to flourish individually within their communities and as citizens in a plural society and global community. RE has an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning.

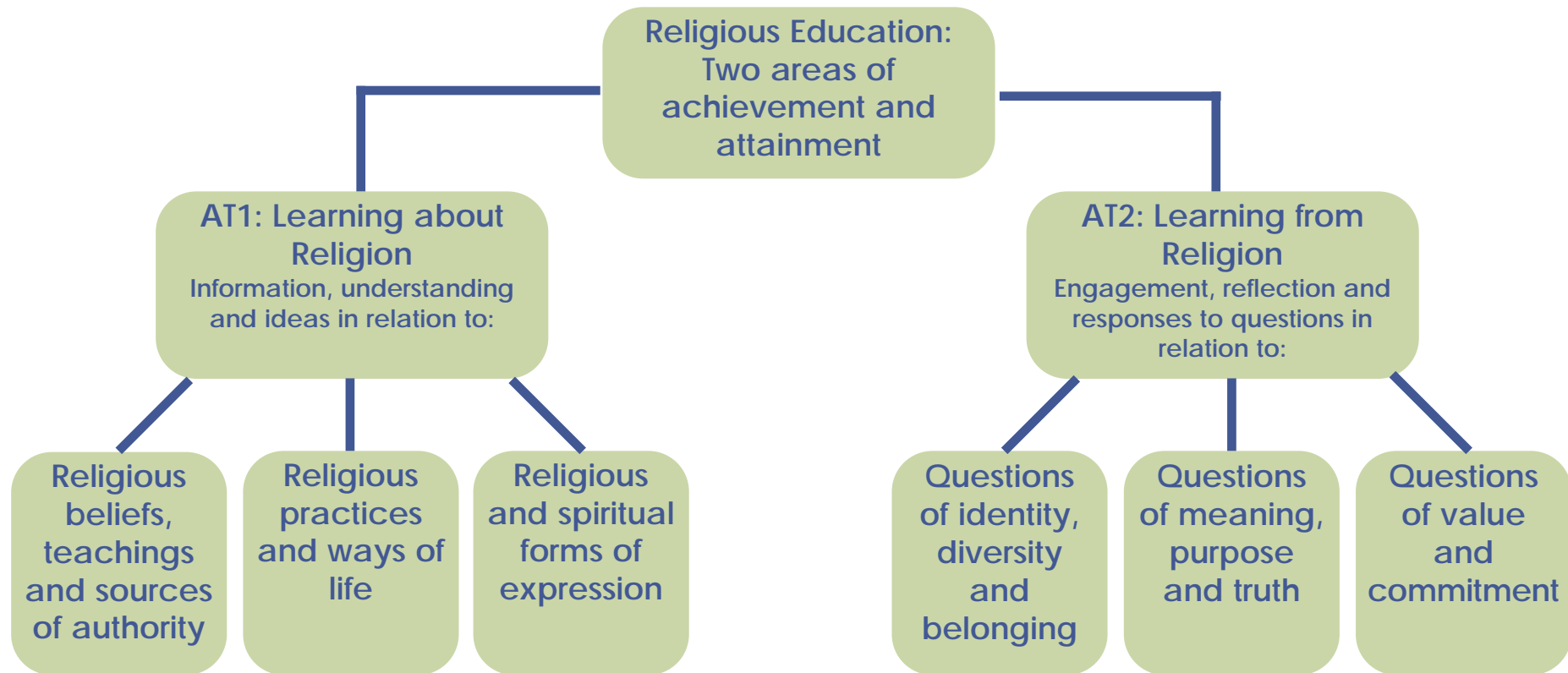
RE enables pupils to develop respect for and sensitivity to others, in particular those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own. Through making a major contribution to the community cohesion work of schools, RE promotes discernment and enables pupils to combat prejudice.

## The aims of RE

RE aims to enable pupils to:

- develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other principal religious traditions represented in Great Britain;
- develop understanding of the ways in which beliefs influence people in their behaviour, practices and in their communities;
- reflect on, deepen and clarify their own experiences, values and beliefs and those of others;
- develop awareness of fundamental questions about life arising from human experience and how religious beliefs and practices can relate to them;
- recognise the right of people to hold diverse beliefs and values and to develop positive attitudes of respect towards other people; benefit from opportunities to enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## The field of enquiry in RE



The Wakefield Agreed Syllabus requires a 50/50 balance between learning about religion and learning from religion in all aspects of teaching and learning.

## Every Child Matters in RE

The Wakefield Agreed Syllabus for RE is asking the fundamental question: 'What is it to be human?' The Agreed Syllabus makes a significant contribution to the implementation of the view that 'Every Child Matters' through its explorations of religious and ethical teachings.

<b>Be healthy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Exploring what it means to respect the body, while reflecting on religious beliefs, investigating healthy living through religious teachings about food and drink, caring for the environment.</li> <li>■ Exploring attitudes to sexual relationships that promote the wellbeing of all.</li> <li>■ Encouraging a healthy mind and spirit through activities such as circle time, understanding prayer, stilling and meditation, and reasoned debate.</li> <li>■ Encouraging a positive self-image by enabling personal reflection and exploring ideas about the self from different religious traditions.</li> <li>■ Enabling the consideration of teachings and examples from the faiths about self-respect, drug taking and intoxicants.</li> </ul>
<b>Stay safe</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Giving opportunities to explore prejudice and discrimination including teachings from the faiths.</li> <li>■ Offering opportunities to consider rules and principles that guide individuals within communities and support the vulnerable.</li> <li>■ Encouraging pupils to understand the difference between right and wrong.</li> <li>■ Helping them to consider: who should be their role models?</li> <li>■ Reflecting on the value of security gained from family life, from religious community and ritual, from faith in the transcendent and from other sources.</li> <li>■ Encouraging them to be increasingly able to take responsibility for who and what they are.</li> </ul>
<b>Enjoy and achieve</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Providing a rigorous, challenging, good quality RE curriculum that enables pupils to learn about themselves and others through exploring religion and the big questions of life.</li> <li>■ Encountering living faith (e.g. through visits and visitors) and being given opportunities to ask and develop answers to their own questions of meaning and purpose.</li> <li>■ Setting clear and challenging standards and assessment criteria, enabling all pupils to take pride in their achievements in RE.</li> <li>■ Raising standards by promoting national accreditation of RE achievements for 14-19s.</li> <li>■ Creating an inclusive RE curriculum that inspires all pupils, including those with special educational needs.</li> </ul>
<b>Make a positive contribution</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Enabling pupils to explore concepts of identity, community and belonging in religions, and develop positive views of their own and respect for others.</li> <li>■ Encouraging pupils to evaluate the impact of religious rules and codes for living, and the meaning of being 'law abiding'.</li> <li>■ Giving opportunities to consider the nature of 'being human' and the positive common bonds found in shared human experiences.</li> <li>■ Enabling pupils to express their own views and ideas on all the questions RE addresses.</li> <li>■ Encouraging open mindedness in handling questions to which people have different answers.</li> <li>■ Helping to develop the ability to disagree respectfully.</li> </ul>
<b>Achieve economic wellbeing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Experiencing a curriculum that will allow them to grow and develop into individuals prepared for working life, able to flourish in the workplace.</li> <li>■ Giving opportunities to consider, and sometimes challenge, the meaning of 'economic wellbeing' through studying the responses of faith to money, wealth, poverty, generosity and responsibility.</li> <li>■ Exploring religious critiques of materialism and consumerism in a balanced way.</li> <li>■ Providing all learners (at KS4 or 14-19) with the opportunity to achieve a nationally accredited RE/RS qualification.</li> <li>■ Encouraging an interest in religious and spiritual issues that enables lifelong learning.</li> </ul>

## Curriculum time for RE

In order to deliver the aims and objectives of the syllabus, the Standing Advisory Conference for Religious Education strongly recommends a minimum allocation of curriculum time for RE. This is based upon the DFES Framework for RE (2004), the Dearing Curriculum Review (1996) and the Model Syllabuses (1994): a minimum 5% of curriculum time is required for teaching RE.

**Foundation Stage:** Time for RE needs to be flexibly organised, but should graduate towards the KS1 time allocation

**KS1:** 30 hours per year

**KS2:** 45 hours per year

**KS3:** 45 hours per year

**KS4:** 5% of curriculum time, or 70 hours across the key stage

**16-19:** Allocation of time should be clearly identifiable, and should avoid tokenism

### Note:

RE is a core subject in the curriculum for all pupils. The requirements of this Agreed Syllabus are not subject to the flexibility of the Foundation Subjects.

Curriculum time for Religious Education is distinct from the time schools may spend on collective worship or school assembly. The times given above are for Religious Education.

## Community cohesion: the contribution of RE

RE makes a key contribution to enabling pupils to acquire knowledge and understanding of, and develop positive attitudes towards living in a diverse community. Attitudes of tolerance, sensitivity and respect for all can develop where teaching and learning enable pupils to be sure of their own beliefs and identity, and appreciative of the beliefs and identities of others.

It is essential that young people learn to understand and respect a range of beliefs, and while growing in confidence achieve a level of critical awareness. This can help all young people to make a positive contribution to a tolerant and respectful community in school, locally and in the wider world.

Through RE, pupils can explore and learn about:

- the diversity of religions found in their local, regional and national communities;
- the best ways to express their own ideas, opinions and beliefs about religious, spiritual and moral questions;
- the significance of religious beliefs and membership for some people;
- the ways in which religious communities are distinctive (RE should never imply that religions are 'all the same');
- the common ground and shared action that religious communities sometimes achieve in making a contribution to society for the wellbeing of all;
- the impact of beliefs upon action and upon daily life;
- the tensions and disagreements between different communities, and the ways of resolving these tensions that promote fairness and equality of opportunity;
- the teachings of each religion about respect for all and common humanity.

Through these curricular opportunities, it is intended that RE will be a focal point in every child's learning about diversity, equality, respect and community cohesion. In this way, RE can make its particular contribution to community cohesion in Wakefield and its schools.

## The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Religious Education plays a crucial role in the development of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and should be seen as the lead subject in promoting these. However, RE does not have the sole responsibility for promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. All subjects and indeed the school ethos contribute to developing these as well. Learning opportunities include:

### Spiritual Development

- by giving pupils the opportunity to explore values and beliefs and the way they impact on people's lives;
- by encouraging pupils to explore what it means to be human for themselves and in their relationships with others;
- by asking questions about the meaning and purpose of life, giving pupils space for their own thoughts, ideas and concerns.

### Moral Development

- by exploring and responding to the issues of right and wrong, making decisions and judgements and the consequences of these;
- by recognising that we all have responsibilities and rights;
- by exploring how religious belief can affect moral decisions.

### Social Development

- through exploring the nature of religious communities;
- by promoting skills that help pupils relate to others, showing respect for people, living things, property and the environment so they can play a full part in the life of their community and society;
- by asking fundamental questions about the nature of people and society.

### Cultural development

- through raising awareness and developing understanding and appreciation of the variety of cultures, beliefs and practices in their own society and in the world;
- by developing well informed and open-minded attitudes to cultural diversity;
- by developing an appreciation of the cultures of others, for example through the arts, literature, music, sport and travel.

## Key skills and other aspects of the curriculum

### Promoting key skills through RE

#### 1. Communication

In RE, pupils encounter a range of distinctive and specialist forms of written and spoken language, including sacred texts, stories, history, poetry, creeds, liturgy, symbolic language and worship. These are powerful uses of language, linked to fundamental human needs and aspirations. RE has distinctive concepts and terminology, which stimulate pupils to use their language skills to reflect on their own experiences, and to help them understand and appreciate their spiritual, moral and cultural inheritance. In particular, pupils learn to talk and write with knowledge and understanding about religious and other beliefs and values; to discuss many of the fundamental questions of life; to construct reasoned arguments; to think reflectively and critically about spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues; and to present information and insights about these issues in words and symbols. Moreover, RE emphasises that truly effective communication also includes an empathetic understanding of people, their beliefs and values, and the issues that concern them.

#### 2. Information and communication technology skills

RE provides opportunities for pupils to use and develop their information and communication technology (ICT) skills. In particular, ICT can support the activities of finding information about beliefs, teachings and practices and their impact on individuals, communities and cultures. ICT can help pupils to communicate and exchange information and understanding with others and to investigate and record data. Many faith communities use ICT on a worldwide basis. ICT skills can also enable pupils to encounter religion in ways that are authentic, diverse, contemporary and global.

#### 3. Working with others

RE provides opportunities for pupils to work cooperatively, sharing ideas, discussing beliefs, values and practices and learning from each other. RE can focus on the skills of learning from other people, and of listening well to those whose perspective is different to one's own. RE is also centrally concerned with questions about conflict and its resolution, tolerance, sensitivity and respect, making a key contribution in these areas to pupils' preparation for adult life in plural societies.

#### 4. Improving own learning and performance

RE includes learning about taking responsibility for oneself and others. The beliefs and values studied are the foundation for personal integrity and choice. Such study is personally challenging and relevant to many aspects of learning and achievement throughout life, including future careers. Skills of awareness and reflection on change are at the heart of some good RE practice.

#### 5. Problem solving

RE deals with religious and moral beliefs and values that underpin individual problem solving and decision making. Examples include exploring hard questions about living together and about life's mysteries; examples might include questions of meaning and purpose, bullying, personal relationships (including sexual relationships), striving for ideals, the use of money and facing bereavement. Problem

centred learning is important in RE, where humanity's ultimate questions cannot be easily solved, and where the exploration of faith, of the spiritual dimension and of ideas of truth is at the heart of the learning process.

## **Promoting other aspects of the curriculum**

### **1. RE and the use of language**

Along with other subjects of the curriculum, RE both contributes to and gains from the development of high standards in reading, writing, talking and listening. RE offers particular opportunities for pupils to develop their language skills in working with symbolic language, the explanatory power of metaphor, the language of debate, discussion and argument, belief, value, questioning, perspectives and opinions. Especially with regard to text level work, religious text is a rich source of learning and stimulus in RE. RE makes extensive use of the tools of dialogue, conversation and discussion in setting high standards. This syllabus provides for interactions between RE and language work that set high standards of learning for all pupils.

### **2. RE, PSHE and Citizenship**

Religious education shares some important objectives with personal, social and health education and citizenship education. This syllabus requires that provision for RE should be clearly identifiable and distinct from other curriculum areas, but recognises that issues of, for example, identity, community, culture, ethnicity, respect, plurality, ethics and beliefs may be taught within RE and make a substantial contribution to pupils' education and development personally and as young citizens. RE has a particular focus upon community and global questions, and Citizenship and PSHE may be enriched through attending to the opportunity to encounter some religious ways of seeing the world.

### **3. Thinking skills**

RE is an academic subject, based on learning about and understanding Christianity and the other principal religions of the UK. Skills of research, selection, analysis, interpretation, reflection, empathy, discernment, synthesis, application, expression, communication and evaluation are promoted for pupils from an early age. RE is in some ways a natural thinking centre for the curriculum, and the tools of critical thinking and analysis are increasingly useful to the teacher of RE. The study of religion is a rigorous activity involving a variety of intellectual disciplines and skills. These include learning about the sacred texts of the world; understanding the development, history and contemporary forms of religious belief and practice; studying philosophy and ethics; and undertaking studies into the phenomena, psychology, sociology and theology of religion.

### **4. Creative and cultural aspects of the curriculum**

The range of beliefs and values studied in RE relates to questions of human nature and personality, personal fulfilment and vocation, sources of inspiration and discovery, and the connection between beliefs, values and the arts. RE has a focus upon expressing the spiritual through a variety of means, including creativity. RE enables pupils to learn from the spirituality of the arts, and to be creative for themselves. RE seeks to enable all pupils to appreciate the value of cultural diversity through learning from religion.

## **5. Education for racial equality and community cohesion**

The damaging effects of xenophobia, racial stereotyping and the place of human hatred and conflict in history and the contemporary world raise questions about belief and behaviour for all pupils. RE has a focus upon enabling pupils to develop attitudes of tolerance and respect for those who see the world in a different way to themselves, and upon promoting dialogue between pupils about issues of belief, community and religion. In these ways RE can make a key contribution to anti-racist education and education for community cohesion for the wellbeing of all in a plural society.

## **6. Inclusion and Religious Education**

In law and in practice, RE is for all. All pupils are entitled to full access to the RE curriculum. This includes all those with particular learning needs such as pupils with any special educational needs, pupils from smaller religious communities, gifted and talented pupils, those from the full range of ethnic groups and both boys and girls. Pupils with statements of special educational needs are to be taught the Agreed Syllabus as far as is practicable. This syllabus emphasises the educational value of reflecting on experience and responding to religion, alongside the development of knowledge and understanding of religions: the opportunities for RE to contribute to the learning of all pupils are rich and diverse.

## **7. Education for sustainable development and environmental awareness.**

How human beings treat each other, the living world and their environment, and use the world's resources, depends on their understanding both of the world's and their own significance. Such significance is reflected in the beliefs and stories about the origin and value of life which are held to be sacred in particular religious traditions. RE has a focus upon the moral and spiritual understanding of questions about poverty, equality, justice, environment and values.

## **8. Financial capability**

RE deals with the issues of the value and proper use of personal property, including money. These include means of acquisition, responsible use, taking care of others and giving to charity. RE includes a clear focus upon the ethics of money, exploring what is good and evil in relation to wealth and poverty. The skills of critical reflection and analysis with regard to the use and abuse of money are integral to RE.

## **9. Enterprise education**

How and why human beings work for themselves and others is a fundamental question of beliefs and values, to which learning in RE makes a contribution in its study of religions and other belief systems. RE asks analytical and critical questions in this and other areas.

## **10. Health and Safety**

The general requirements for a safe and healthy school include teaching pupils to notice and take account of risks and hazards in their environment, and in work that takes them to any unfamiliar environment. In RE, for example in visiting places of worship and other classroom work, this requirement applies.

## Religious education and the general teaching requirements

Good teaching and learning for all pupils, but particularly those with AEN, makes use of multi-sensory strategies involving physical, visual and tactile stimuli to engage pupils' active participation and response in lessons. Good teaching and learning is sensitive to varied learning styles.

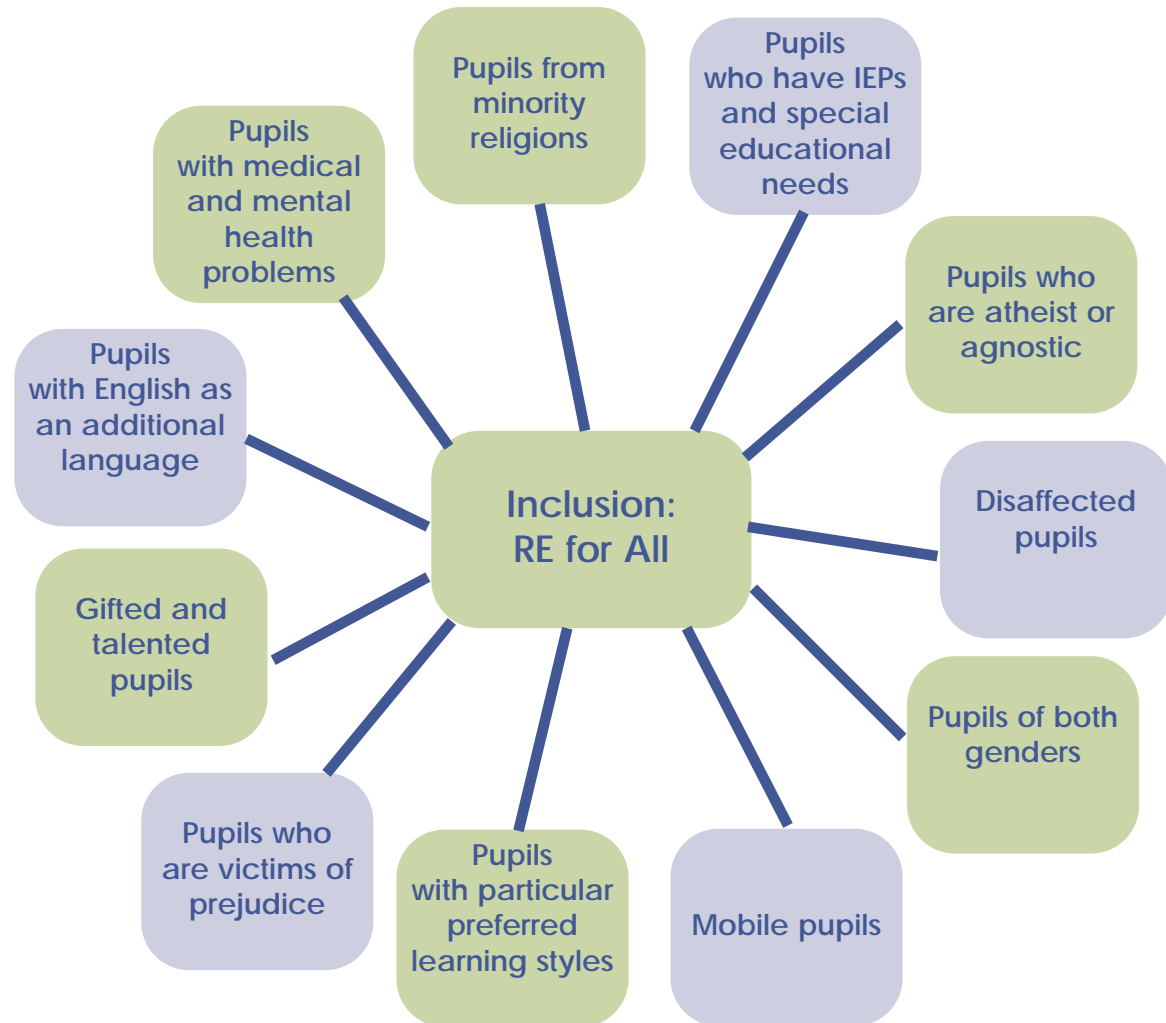
## Religious education and inclusion

Religious education can make a significant contribution to inclusion, particularly in its focus on promoting respect for all. This syllabus contains many references to the role of religious education in challenging stereotypical views and appreciating, positively, differences in others. The syllabus enables all pupils to consider the impact of people's beliefs on their own actions and lifestyle. The syllabus also highlights the importance of religions and beliefs and how religious education can develop pupils' self-esteem.

Effective inclusion involves teaching a lively, stimulating religious education curriculum that:

- builds on and is enriched by the differing experiences pupils bring to religious education;
- meets the learning needs of all pupils including those with learning difficulties, those who are gifted and talented, boys and girls, pupils for whom English is an additional language, pupils from all religious communities and pupils from a wide range of ethnic groups and diverse family backgrounds.

RE according to the Wakefield Syllabus must enable pupils in all these groups to enjoy and achieve through the curriculum.



## Providing effective learning opportunities for all pupils in religious education

Religious education should be accessible to all pupils.

The National Curriculum sets out three principles essential to developing a more inclusive curriculum which the Agreed Syllabus seeks fully to support:

1. Setting suitable learning challenges;
2. Responding to pupils' diverse needs;
3. Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

### 1. Setting suitable learning challenges

This Agreed Syllabus sets out what pupils should learn at each key stage. Teachers should teach the knowledge, understanding and skills in ways which suit their pupils' abilities and needs. This means:

- setting differentiated tasks to take account of the needs of those pupils whose attainments fall below or significantly exceed the expectations for the age group;
- using a variety of teaching and learning strategies, taking account, wherever possible, of pupils' preferred learning styles and individual needs;
- setting targets for learning;
- providing opportunities for pupil responses in ways which they initiate for themselves;
- using appropriate assessment approaches which allow for different learning styles of all groups and individuals.

### 2. Responding to the diverse needs pupils bring to their learning

The aim for RE applies to all pupils. When planning, teachers need to provide opportunities for all pupils to achieve, including:

- boys and girls;
- pupils with special educational needs, including the gifted and talented;
- those with disabilities;
- looked after children;
- pupils from different social, ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

To overcome any potential barriers to learning in religious education, some pupils may require:

- support to access text, such as through prepared tapes, particularly when working with significant quantities of written materials or at speed;
- help to communicate their ideas through methods other than extended writing, where this is a requirement; for example, pupils may demonstrate their understanding through speech or the use of ICT.
- a non-visual/visual way of accessing sources of information when undertaking research in aspects of religious education, for example using audio materials.

### 3. Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils

#### *RE and pupils with complex needs*

RE is a statutory part of the core curriculum for all pupils, including those with learning difficulties. Pupils with complex needs are found in all contexts and all teachers are teachers of AEN (For further information see the revised Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs published in 2002). Good quality teaching in RE will tailor the syllabus carefully to the special needs of all pupils. Pupils with additional educational needs will not always reach Level 1 of the expectations in RE. Where appropriate, the 'P' scales (which are included in the syllabus) may be used as an indicator for progress within RE. Work relating to the programmes of study that is planned for pupils with special educational needs should take account of the targets and recommendations in their Individual Educational Programmes.

For the small number of pupils who may need the provision, material may be selected from earlier or later key stages where this is necessary to enable individual pupils to progress and demonstrate achievement. Such material should be presented in contexts suitable to the pupil's age. In making decisions about adjusting the content of the key stage, teachers should take into account the previous experience of the pupil as well as the necessity to communicate the variations in their entitlement to subsequent teachers.

#### *Religious background of pupils*

The different experiences, interests and strengths that pupils bring are particularly relevant in religious education. Some are active and committed within faith communities, some have occasional contact and others have no links at all. Some pupils from secular families bring a particular perspective or view of the world to RE. Teachers will need to take account of these differing religious and other backgrounds, plan to meet the needs of individuals and acknowledge and respect the beliefs and practices in the home and family.

## Attitudes in Religious Education

While the knowledge, skills and understanding are central to the national framework for religious education, it is also vital that religious education encourages pupils to develop positive attitudes to their learning and to the beliefs and values of others. The following four attitudes are essential for good learning in religious education and should be developed at each stage or phase of religious education:

■ **self-awareness;** ■ **respect for all;** ■ **open-mindedness;** ■ **appreciation and wonder.**

**Self-awareness** in religious education includes pupils:

- feeling confident about their own beliefs and identity and sharing them without fear of embarrassment or ridicule;
- developing a realistic and positive sense of their own religious, moral and spiritual ideas;
- recognising their own uniqueness as human beings and affirming their self-worth;
- becoming increasingly sensitive to the impact of their ideas and behaviour on other people.

**Respect for all** in religious education includes pupils:

- developing skills of listening and a willingness to learn from others, even when others' views are different from their own;
- being ready to value difference and diversity to promote tolerance for the common good, appreciating that some beliefs are not inclusive and considering the issues that this raises for individuals and society;
- being prepared to recognise and acknowledge their own bias;
- being sensitive to the feelings and ideas of others.

**Open-mindedness** in religious education includes pupils:

- being willing to learn and gain new understanding;
- engaging in argument or disagreeing reasonably and respectfully (without belittling or abusing others) about religious, moral and spiritual questions;
- being willing to go beyond surface impressions;
- distinguishing between opinions, viewpoints and beliefs in connection with issues of conviction and faith;
- being willing to appreciate the identity of others while developing confidence in one's own identity.

**Appreciation and wonder** in religious education includes pupils:

- developing their imagination and curiosity;
- recognising that knowledge is bounded by mystery;
- appreciating the sense of wonder at the world in which they live;
- developing their capacity to respond to questions of meaning and purpose.

**At each key stage, the syllabus provides examples of specific opportunities for developing these attitudes.**

## Skills in Religious Education

Skills for learning in RE	What learning processes develop these skills? What abilities should teaching enable? Teaching should enable pupils to:
<p><b>Investigate</b> – in RE this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ asking relevant questions;</li> <li>■ knowing how to use different types of sources as a way of gathering information;</li> <li>■ knowing what may constitute evidence for understanding religions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ask increasingly deep and complex questions about religion.</li> <li>■ Use a widening range of sources to pursue answers.</li> <li>■ Focus on selecting and understanding relevant sources to deal with religious and spiritual questions with increasing insight and sensitivity.</li> <li>■ Evaluate a range of responses to the questions and issues they study.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Express</b> - in RE this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the ability to explain concepts, rituals and practices;</li> <li>■ the ability to identify and articulate matters of deep conviction and concern, and to respond to religious issues through a variety of media.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Explain what words and actions might mean to believers.</li> <li>■ Articulate their own reactions and ideas about religious questions and practices.</li> <li>■ Clarify and analyse with growing confidence aspects of religion which they find valuable or interesting or negative.</li> <li>■ Explain in words and other ways their own responses to matters of deep conviction.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Interpret</b> - in RE this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the ability to draw meaning from artefacts, works of art, poetry and symbolism;</li> <li>■ the ability to suggest meanings of religious texts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Say what an object means, or explain a symbol.</li> <li>■ Use figures of speech or metaphors to speak creatively about religious ideas.</li> <li>■ Understand increasingly the diverse ways in which religious and spiritual experience can be interpreted.</li> <li>■ Clarify and express the role of interpretation in religion and life. Recognise religious materials and take note of their details and style.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Reflect</b> - in RE this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the ability to reflect on feelings, relationships, experience, ultimate questions, beliefs and practices;</li> <li>■ the ability to use stillness, mental and physical, to think with clarity and care about significant events, emotions and atmospheres.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Describe how action and atmosphere makes them feel.</li> <li>■ Experience the use of silence and thoughtfulness in religion and in life.</li> <li>■ Take increasing account of the meanings of experience and discern the depth of questions religion addresses.</li> <li>■ Respond sensitively and with insight to religious and spiritual phenomena and their meanings.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Empathise</b> - in RE this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the ability to consider the thoughts, feelings, experiences, attitudes, beliefs and values of others;</li> <li>■ developing the power of imagination to identify feelings such as love, wonder, forgiveness and sorrow;</li> <li>■ the ability to see the world through the eyes of others, and to see issues from their point of view.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ See with sensitivity how others respond to their actions, words or behaviour.</li> <li>■ Connect their feelings, both positive and negative, with those of others, including those in religious stories and contexts.</li> <li>■ Imagine with growing awareness how they would feel in a different situation from their own.</li> <li>■ Identify thoughtfully with other people from a range of communities and stances for life.</li> </ul>

Skills for learning in RE	What learning processes develop these skills? What abilities should teaching enable? Teaching should enable pupils to:
<p><b>Apply</b> - in RE this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ making the association between religions and individual community, national and international life;</li> <li>■ identifying key religious values and their interplay with secular ones.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ See links and simple connections between aspects of religions.</li> <li>■ Make increasingly subtle and complex links between religious material and their own ideas.</li> <li>■ Apply learning from one religious context to new contexts with growing awareness and clarity.</li> <li>■ Apply their learning from different religious sources to the development of own ideas.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Discern</b> – in RE this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ explaining the significance of aspects of religious belief and practice;</li> <li>■ developing insight into people, motives, actions and consequences;</li> <li>■ seeing clearly how individuals might learn from the religions they study for themselves.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Experience the awe and wonder of the natural world and of human relations.</li> <li>■ Be willing to look beyond the surface at underlying ideas and questions.</li> <li>■ Weigh up the value religious believers find in their faith with insight, relating it to their own experience.</li> <li>■ Discern with clarity, respect and thoughtfulness the impact (positive and negative) of religious and secular ways of living.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Analyse</b> - in RE this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ distinguishing between opinion, belief and fact;</li> <li>■ distinguishing between the features of different religions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ See what kinds of reasons are given to explain religious aspects of life.</li> <li>■ Join in discussion about issues arising from the study of religion.</li> <li>■ Use reasons, facts, opinions, examples, arguments and experience to justify or question a view of a religious issue.</li> <li>■ Analyse the religious views encountered with fairness, balance, empathy and critical rigour.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Synthesise</b> - in RE this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ linking significant features of religion together in a coherent pattern;</li> <li>■ connecting different aspects of life into a meaningful whole.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Notice similarities between stories and practices from religions.</li> <li>■ Use general words to describe a range of religious practice and teaching.</li> <li>■ Make links between different aspects of one religion, or similar and contrasting aspects of two or more religions.</li> <li>■ Explain clearly the relationships, similarities and differences between a range of religious arguments, ideas, views and teachings.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Evaluate</b> - in RE this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the ability to debate issues of religious significance with reference to evidence and argument;</li> <li>■ weighing the respective claims of self-interest, consideration for others, religious teaching and individual conscience.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Talk about what makes people choose religious ways of life and the reasons they give for these choices.</li> <li>■ Describe how and why religious people show the importance of symbols, key figures, texts or stories.</li> <li>■ Weigh up with fairness and balance the value they see in a range of religious practices.</li> <li>■ Evaluate skilfully some religious responses to moral issues, and their own responses.</li> </ul>

Of course, the development of many of these skills occurs across the curriculum in many different subject areas.

## Processes for learning in Religious Education

This Agreed Syllabus for RE in Wakefield requires a range of learning processes to be employed by teachers so that pupils each make progress at a good pace, and achieve the highest standards of which they are capable. This syllabus requires active processes of learning as well as factual or knowledge based instruction. In particular, this means that RE in Wakefield schools will make use of the widest possible range of strategies for learning, including those listed here, across the 5-16 age range.

**In setting high standards for all pupils in RE, the processes of learning are as significant as any assessable outcome.**

Key Learning Processes:	Some possible examples for the 5-16 age range
1. <b>Open questioning</b> to engage learners in RE at every age group with their own search for answers and ideals by which to live.	5-7s Identify the questions about the world and space they would like to answer. 7-11s Get used to being asked questions that are unanswerable, and to thinking of alternative answers. 11-14s Create banks of 'puzzling questions' on religious topics and select examples for study with reference to two religions. 14-16s Work with ambiguous evidence and examples to analyse ultimate questions and religious and moral responses to them.
2. <b>Thinking skills</b> activities to enable learners to apply knowledge for themselves, to deepen their conceptual awareness, to connect new knowledge to their understanding of the world and to become active students of religion and theological or philosophical thinking.	5-7s Are enabled to notice some key ideas in the celebration of festivals and to learn the ways these ideas can make sense of Christmas, Eid-Al-Fitr, Hannukah or Divali. 7-11s Rank, order and sort items they have learned about in a study of Islam to answer the question 'what matters most to Muslims?' 11-14s Use strategies like 'mysteries', 'mental maps' and 'human graphs' to explore a range of opinions of religious and spiritual issues for themselves, and develop their own views. 14-16s Use role play to consider the various factors that led to the establishment of two religions, and consider what would enable the beginning of a new religion in the 21st century.
3. <b>Literacy for RE:</b> Using a wide range of different kinds of texts from religious sources and literacy activities from religions focusing on both speaking and listening and reading and writing to develop pupils' literacy skills and to use these skills in the service of high standards in RE.	5-7s Children hear well told stories from scriptures and sacred texts and talk about what the stories mean. 7-11s Pupils use parables or other religious stories to think about good and evil, and develop parables of their own. 11-14s Pupils use a range of literary forms found in religion such as creeds, Psalms or moral precepts to develop their own ability to express beliefs and values in speaking and writing. 14-16s Students use the tools of literary criticism to analyse accounts of miracles, answered prayers or experiences of God's presence. They express their own spiritual insights clearly and thoughtfully in writing.

Key Learning Processes:	Some possible examples for the 5-16 age range
<p><b>Discussion:</b> in RE discussion is often valued highly by pupils and is a key classroom tool, where listening respectfully and communicating clearly are skills and processes at the heart of good learning in the subject. Time for speaking thoughtfully and listening carefully should be built in to every unit taught.</p>	<p>5-7s Children take turns to speak and listen when talking about RE topics.            7-11s Pupils can use class discussion and group discussion to learn about different opinions and points of view, and to express themselves clearly on religious questions and issues.            11-14s Pupils can talk and listen thoughtfully, making an active contribution to group discussions, arguments or reflective conversations and activities that rely on shared viewpoints.            14-16s Students can use a range of discussion skills to clarify, deepen and explore varied perspectives on issues such as world development, music in worship or the theory of a just war.</p>
<p><b>Expressive arts and creativity for learning:</b> Connecting RE learning with a wide variety of forms of expression such as music, art, drama, dance and literature to enable pupils to see how religious and spiritual expression takes a variety of forms: some religious communities are ascetic; others use all forms of art. This also enables pupils to respond in a range of ways that suit their own learning preferences.</p>	<p>5-7s Children take themes from religious stories such as danger and safety, good and bad, winning and losing or thanking and praising and make creative pictures of the scenes that show these themes.            7-11s Pupils use dance or drama to interpret a religious story with sensitivity.            11-14s Pupils use a variety of creative activities to examine how people from different religions express their beliefs about god. Pupils do a piece of imaginative work that expresses some of their own key beliefs.            14-16s Students use their creative skills to express responses to issues such as life after death or the value of the human person through an art form of their choice, in the light of the poetry, stained glass or art of a religion they have studied.</p>
<p><b>Visits and visitors for learning</b>, to enable an increasingly authentic, local and contemporary encounter with the religions studied.</p>	<p>5-7s Children receive a religious visitor and think up some questions to ask them about their faith.            7-11s Pupils visit a place of worship and plan to record their visit in a class book answering questions about worship, community and belief.            11-14s Pupils plan to use a visit from a believer to gather information and ideas for their study about a key topic (e.g. ideas about God, deciding what is right).            14-16s Students plan to use two visits to places of worship to write a piece of coursework on similarities and differences in worship in the two communities studied.</p>
<p><b>Resources for learning</b>, including the active use of a range of sources and perspectives including DVD, video, ICT, artefacts and stories to provide a rich learning environment in which pupils can deepen their awareness of religious ideas, and approach the sensitivities of many religious communities with respect.</p>	<p>5-7s Learn from religious artefacts and works of art and apply simple literacy methods of thinking about stories to religious stories.            7-11s Watch video or DVD of worship at a place of worship and spend time reading firsthand accounts from members of faith communities, answering questions they have prepared themselves.            11-14s Use internet sites to examine what authentic religious materials are available, and weigh up issues of bias and commitment revealed through this analysis.            14-16s Can make a detailed comparison between worship in two traditions referring to resources from several media and different communities and religions.</p>

## Foundation Stage RE

The foundation stage describes the phase of a child's education from the age of 3 to the end of reception at the age of 5. Religious education is statutory for all pupils registered on the school roll. The statutory requirement for religious education does not extend to nursery classes in maintained schools and is not, therefore, a legal requirement for much of the foundation stage. It may, however, form a valuable part of the educational experience of children throughout the key stage. RE is a requirement for pupils in Reception/FS2, who are on the school roll.

The contribution of religious education to the early learning goals

The early learning goals set out what most children should achieve by the end of the foundation stage. The six areas of learning identified in these goals are:

- personal, social and emotional development;
- communication, language and literacy;
- mathematical development;
- knowledge and understanding of the world;
- physical development;
- creative development.

### Personal, social and emotional development

#### *Examples of religious education-related experiences and opportunities*

- Children use some stories from religious traditions as a stimulus to reflect on their own feelings and experiences and explore them in various ways.
- Using a story as a stimulus, children reflect on the words and actions of characters and decide what they would have done in a similar situation. They learn about the story and its meanings through activity and play.
- Using role-play as a stimulus, children talk about some of the ways that people show love and concern for others and why this is important.
- Children think about issues of right and wrong and how humans help one another.

### Knowledge and understanding of the world

#### *Examples of religious education-related experiences and opportunities*

- Children ask and answer questions about religion and culture, as they occur naturally within their everyday experiences.
- Children visit places of worship.
- They listen to and respond to a wide range of religious and ethnic groups.
- They handle artefacts with curiosity and respect.
- Having visited a local place of worship, children learn new words associated with the place, showing respect.

### Communication, language and literacy

#### *Examples of religious education-related experiences and opportunities*

- Children have opportunities to respond creatively, imaginatively and meaningfully to memorable experiences.
- Using a religious celebration as a stimulus, children talk about the special events associated with the celebration.
- Through artefacts, stories and music, children learn about important religious celebrations.

### Creative development

#### *Examples of religious education-related experiences and opportunities*

- Using religious artefacts as a stimulus, children think about and express meanings associated with the artefact.
- Children share their own experiences and feelings and those of others, and are supported in reflecting on them.

Religious education can make an active contribution to all these areas but has a particularly important contribution to make to:

- personal, social and emotional development;
- knowledge and understanding of the world;
- creative development,

and can easily be linked in with areas of Communication, Language and Literacy development.

During the foundation stage, children may begin to explore the world of religion in terms of special people, books, times, places and objects and by visiting places of worship. They listen to and talk about stories. They may be introduced to religious words and use their senses in exploring religions and beliefs, practices and forms of expression. They reflect on their own feelings and experiences. They use their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation and wonder of the world in which they live.

It is important to make as many cross curricular links as possible when developing RE across the Foundation Stage. Ideas of such links have been stated above and more can easily be formed.

## Key Stage 1 RE

Throughout key stage 1, pupils explore Christianity and at least one other principal religion. They learn about different beliefs about God and the world around them. They encounter and respond to a range of stories, artefacts and other religious materials. They learn to recognise that beliefs are expressed in a variety of ways, and begin to use specialist vocabulary. They begin to understand the importance and value of religion and belief, especially for other children and their families. Pupils ask relevant questions and develop a sense of wonder about the world, using their imaginations. They talk about what is important to them and others, valuing themselves, reflecting on their own feelings and experiences and developing a sense of belonging.

### Elements of the programme of study:

- **believing**: what people believe about God, humanity and the natural world
- **story**: how and why some stories are sacred and important in religion
- **celebrations**: how and why celebrations are important in religion
- **symbols**: how and why symbols express religious meaning
- **leaders and teachers**: figures who have an influence on others locally, nationally and globally in religion
- **belonging**: where and how people belong and why belonging is important
- **myself**: who I am and my uniqueness as a person in a family and community

### The four strands of learning in Religious Education:

There are four underlying strands of learning in RE which the Agreed Syllabus develops. These all contribute to the elements of the programme of study explained above. The four strands are designed to ensure that pupils' experience of RE is balanced and comprehensive. The strands are

- A. Self, others and encountering the world
- B. Beliefs and teachings
- C. Ways of living
- D. Ways of expressing meaning

### Knowledge, skills and understanding

#### Learning about religion

Pupils should be taught to:

- explore a range of religious stories and sacred writings and talk about their meanings
- name and explore a range of celebrations, worship and rituals in religion, noting similarities where appropriate
- identify the importance, for some people, of belonging to a religion and recognise the difference this makes to their lives
- explore how religious beliefs and ideas can be expressed through the arts and communicate their responses
- identify and suggest meanings for religious symbols and begin to use a range of religious words.

## **Learning from religion**

Pupils should be taught to:

- reflect on and consider religious and spiritual feelings, experiences and concepts such as worship, wonder, praise, thanks, concern, joy and sadness
- ask and respond imaginatively to puzzling questions, communicating their ideas
- identify what matters to them and others, including those with religious commitments, and communicate their responses
- reflect on how spiritual and moral values relate to their own behaviour
- recognise that religious teachings and ideas make a difference to individuals, families and the local community.

## **Breadth of study**

During the key stage, pupils should be taught the knowledge, skills and understanding through the following areas of study:

### **Religions and beliefs**

- Christianity
- at least one other principal religion (either Hinduism or Islam)
- a secular world view, where appropriate

### **Experiences and opportunities**

- visiting places of worship and focusing on symbols and feelings
- listening and responding to visitors from local faith communities
- using their senses and having times of quiet reflection
- using art and design, music, dance and drama to develop their creative talents and imagination
- sharing their own beliefs, ideas and values and talking about their feelings and experiences
- beginning to use ICT to explore religions and beliefs as practised in the local and wider community.

**This statutory outline programme of study is in strong continuity with Wakefield's previous Agreed Syllabus (2003), and is elaborated in guidance materials that provide an outline scheme of work in 12 half-termly units for schools to use or adapt.**

## Key Stage 2 RE

Throughout key stage 2, pupils learn about Christianity and at least two of the other principal religions, recognising the impact of religion and belief locally, nationally and globally. They make connections between differing aspects of religion and consider the different forms of religious expression. They consider the beliefs, teachings, practices and ways of life central to religion. They learn about sacred texts and other sources and consider their meanings. They begin to recognise diversity in religion, learning about similarities and differences both within and between religions and beliefs and the importance of dialogue between them. They extend the range and use of specialist vocabulary. They recognise the challenges involved in distinguishing between ideas of right and wrong, and valuing what is good and true. They communicate their ideas, recognising other people's viewpoints. They consider their own beliefs and values and those of others in the light of their learning in religious education.

### Elements of the programme of study

- **beliefs and questions:** how people's beliefs about God, the world and others impact on their lives
- **teachings and authority:** what sacred texts and other sources say about God, the world and human life
- **worship, pilgrimage and sacred places:** where, how and why people worship, including at particular sites
- **the journey of life and death:** why some occasions are sacred to believers, and what people think about life after death
- **symbols and religious expression:** how religious and spiritual ideas are expressed
- **inspirational people:** figures from whom believers find inspiration
- **religion and the individual:** what is expected of a person in following a religion or belief
- **religion, family and community:** how religious families and communities practise their faith, and the contributions this makes to local life
- **beliefs in action in the world:** how religions and beliefs respond to global issues of human rights, fairness, social justice and the importance of the environment

### The four strands of learning in Religious Education:

There are four underlying strands of learning in RE which the Agreed Syllabus develops. These all contribute to the elements of the programme of study explained above. The four strands are designed to ensure that pupils' experience of RE is balanced and comprehensive. The strands are:

- A. Self, others and encountering the world
- B. Beliefs and teachings
- C. Ways of living
- D. Ways of expressing meaning

## **Knowledge, skills and understanding**

### **Learning about religion**

Pupils should be taught to:

- describe the key aspects of religions, especially the people, stories and traditions that influence the beliefs and values of others
- describe the variety of practices and ways of life in religions and understand how these stem from, and are closely connected with, beliefs and teachings
- identify and begin to describe the similarities and differences within and between religions
- investigate the significance of religion in the local, national and global communities
- consider the meaning of a range of forms of religious expression, understand why they are important in religion and note links between them
- describe and begin to understand religious and other responses to ultimate and ethical questions
- use specialist vocabulary in communicating their knowledge and understanding
- use and interpret information about religions from a range of sources.

### **Learning from religion**

Pupils should be taught to:

- reflect on what it means to belong to a faith community, communicating their own and others' responses
- respond to the challenges of commitment both in their own lives and within religious traditions, recognising how commitment to a religion is shown in a variety of ways
- discuss their own and others' views of religious truth and belief, expressing their own ideas
- reflect on ideas of right and wrong and their own and others' responses to them
- reflect on sources of inspiration in their own and others' lives.

### **Breadth of study**

During the key stage, pupils should be taught the Knowledge, skills and understanding through the following areas of study:

#### **Religions and beliefs**

- Christianity
- at least two other principal religions, normally selected from: Islam, Hinduism Judaism
- a religious community with a significant local presence, where appropriate
- a secular world view, where appropriate

#### **Experiences and opportunities**

- encountering religion through visitors and visits to places of worship, and focusing on the impact and reality of religion on the local and global community

- discussing religious and philosophical questions, giving reasons for their own beliefs and those of others
- considering a range of human experiences and feelings
- reflecting on their own and others' insights into life and its origin, purpose and meaning
- expressing and communicating their own and others' insights through art and design, music, dance, drama and ICT
- developing the use of ICT, particularly in enhancing pupils' awareness of religions and beliefs globally.

**This statutory outline programme of study is in strong continuity with Wakefield's previous Agreed Syllabus (2003), and is elaborated in guidance materials that provide an outline scheme of work in half termly units for schools to use or adapt.**

## Key Stage 3 RE

Throughout key stage 3, pupils extend their understanding of Christianity and at least two of the other principal religions in a local, national and global context. They deepen their understanding of important beliefs, concepts and issues of truth and authority in religion. They apply their understanding of religious and philosophical beliefs, teachings and practices to a range of ultimate questions and ethical issues, with a focus on self awareness, relationships, rights and responsibilities. They enquire into and explain some personal, philosophical, theological and cultural reasons for similarities and differences in religious beliefs and values, both within and between religions. They interpret religious texts and other sources, recognising both the power and limitations of language and other forms of communication in expressing ideas and beliefs. They reflect on the impact of religion and belief in the world, considering both the importance of interfaith dialogue and the tensions that exist within and between religions and beliefs. They develop their evaluative skills, showing reasoned and balanced viewpoints when considering their own and others' responses to religious, philosophical and spiritual issues.

### Elements of the programme of study

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

### The four strands of learning in Religious Education:

There are four underlying strands of learning in RE which the Agreed Syllabus develops. These all contribute to the elements of the programme of study explained above. The four strands are designed to ensure that pupils' experience of RE is balanced and comprehensive. The strands are

- A. Self, others and encountering the world
- B. Beliefs and teachings
- C. Ways of living
- D. Ways of expressing meaning

## **Knowledge, skills and understanding**

### **Learning about religion**

Pupils should be taught to:

- investigate and explain the differing impacts of religious beliefs and teachings on individuals, communities and societies
- analyse and explain how religious beliefs and ideas are transmitted by people, texts and traditions
- investigate and explain why people belong to faith communities and explain the reasons for diversity in religion
- analyse and compare the evidence and arguments used when considering issues of truth in religion and philosophy
- discuss and evaluate how religious beliefs and teachings inform answers to ultimate questions and ethical issues
- apply a wide range of religious and philosophical vocabulary consistently and accurately, recognising both the power and limitations of language in expressing religious ideas and beliefs
- interpret and evaluate a range of sources, texts and authorities, from a variety of contexts
- interpret a variety of forms of religious and spiritual expression.

### **Learning from religion**

Pupils should be taught to:

- reflect on the relationship between beliefs, teachings and ultimate questions, communicating their own ideas and using reasoned arguments
- evaluate the challenges and tensions of belonging to a religion and the impact of religion in the contemporary world, expressing their own ideas
- express insights into the significance and value of religion and other world views on human relationships personally, locally and globally
- reflect and evaluate their own and others' beliefs about world issues such as peace and conflict, wealth and poverty and the importance of the environment, communicating their own ideas
- express their own beliefs and ideas, using a variety of forms of expression.

### **Breadth of study**

During the key stage, pupils should be taught the knowledge, skills and understanding through the following areas of study:

#### **Religions and beliefs**

- Christianity
- at least two other principal religions
- a religious community with a significant local presence, where appropriate
- a secular world view, where appropriate

### **Experiences and opportunities**

- encountering people from different religious, cultural and philosophical groups, who can express a range of convictions on religious and ethical issues
- visiting, where possible, places of major religious significance and using opportunities in ICT to enhance pupils' understanding of religion
- discussing, questioning and evaluating important issues in religion and philosophy, including ultimate questions and ethical issues
- reflecting on and carefully evaluating their own beliefs and values and those of others in response to their learning in religious education, using reasoned, balanced arguments
- using a range of forms of expression (such as art and design, music, dance, drama, writing, ICT) to communicate their ideas and responses creatively and thoughtfully
- exploring the connections between religious education and other subject areas such as the arts, humanities, literature, and science.

**This statutory outline programme of study is in strong continuity with Wakefield's previous Agreed Syllabus (2003), and is elaborated in guidance materials that provide an outline scheme of work in 8-10 hour teaching units for schools to use or adapt.**

## Key Stage 4 & 5: 14-19 RE for all

Throughout this phase, students analyse and interpret a wide range of religious, philosophical and ethical concepts in increasing depth. They investigate issues of diversity within and between religions and the ways in which religion and spirituality are expressed in philosophy, ethics, science and the arts. They expand and balance their evaluations of the impact of religions on individuals, communities and societies, locally, nationally and globally. They understand the importance of dialogue between and among different religions and beliefs. They gain a greater understanding of how religion and belief contribute to community cohesion, recognising the various perceptions people have regarding the roles of religion in the world.

### The four strands of learning in Religious Education:

There are four underlying strands of learning in RE which the Agreed Syllabus develops. These all contribute to the elements of the programme of study explained above. The four strands are designed to ensure that pupils experience of RE is balanced and comprehensive. The strands are:

- A. Self, others and encountering the world
- B. Beliefs and teachings
- C. Ways of living
- D. Ways of expressing meaning

### Knowledge, skills and understanding

#### Learning about religion

Students should be taught to:

- investigate, study and interpret significant religious, philosophical and ethical issues, including the study of religious and spiritual experience, in light of their own sense of identity, experience and commitments
- think rigorously and present coherent, widely informed and detailed arguments about beliefs, ethics, values and issues, drawing well-substantiated conclusions
- develop their understanding of the principal methods by which religions and spirituality are studied
- draw upon, interpret and evaluate the rich and varied forms of creative expression in religious life
- use specialist vocabulary to evaluate critically both the power and limitations of religious language.

#### Learning from religion

Students should be taught to:

- reflect on, express and justify their own opinions in light of their learning about religion and their study of religious, philosophical, moral and spiritual questions
- develop their own values and attitudes in order to recognise their rights and responsibilities in light of their learning about religion
- relate their learning in religious education to the wider world, gaining a sense of personal autonomy in preparation for adult life

- develop skills that are useful in a wide range of careers and in adult life generally, especially skills of critical enquiry, creative problem-solving, and communication in a variety of media.

### **Suggested experiences and opportunities**

- Encounter people from different religious, cultural and philosophical perspectives
- Visit places of interest with regard to religious, spiritual, ethical and philosophical issues
- Opportunities to enhance pupils' understanding of religion using ICT
- Pupils should be encouraged to develop skills in discussing, debating questioning and evaluating important issues in religion and philosophy
- Pupils should be encouraged to use different forms of expression, such as music, art, drama, dance, creative writing and ICT to communicate their ideas and responses creatively and thoughtfully
- Pupils should be encouraged to explore the connections between religion and other curriculum areas.
- Pupils should be encouraged to investigate, evaluate and develop an a
- Awareness of their local multifaith community.

### **Religions and beliefs to be studied.**

- Christianity
- at least one other religion (The ASC suggests schools should consider the study of Islam as the UK's second largest religion)
- students' own perspectives are also part of the study.

### **Suggested Elements of the Programme of Study**

#### **A. Philosophical Questioning.**

- Ultimate questions about the existence of God in the universe
- The presence of evil and suffering in the world today
- Questions about life after death
- Evidence and explanations for religious experiences
- Understandings of the relation between science and religion
- The nature of spirituality and spiritual experience
- Methods of exploring religious and spiritual questions

#### **B. Spiritual, Social and Moral issues**

- Evidence for life after death
- Sanctity of life issues, e.g. abortion and euthanasia
- Wealth and poverty
- The environment

- Religion in the media
- War and peace
- Religion and politics
- Sexuality, marriage, divorce and family life
- Social harmony, cohesion and diversity
- Religion and medical issues

### **How can schools fulfil their requirement to provide religious education to all registered students?**

While there is no legal requirement that students must sit public examinations, students deserve the opportunity to have their learning in the statutory curriculum subject of religious education accredited. Accreditation can be through courses leading to qualifications with the title 'Religious Studies' and/or other approved courses that require the study of religion and ethics. Schools should provide:

- for all students aged 14-16, at least one course in religious education or religious studies leading to a qualification approved under Section 966
- for all students aged 16-19, at least one course in religious education or religious studies leading to a qualification approved under Section 96 that represents progression from 14-16.

Schools should plan for continuity of provision of religious education that is progressive and rigorous from key stage 3 for all students. Schools can make this possible by providing access to discrete courses or units leading to qualifications that meet legal requirements regarding the study of Christianity, and/or other principal religions, and/or other beliefs, world views or philosophies, within the context of a pluralistic society. All courses should provide opportunities within and beyond school for learning that involves first-hand experiences and activities involving people, places and events (for example the local area, places of worship and community activities, public meetings, and places of employment, education, training or recreation). Students will have different experiences of religious education according to the courses chosen.

### **What should schools do?**

Schools should provide religious education to every student in accordance with legal requirements. Religious education is a statutory subject for all registered students, including students in the school sixth form, except those withdrawn by their parents. It must be made available in sixth-form colleges to students who wish to take it. Although it is not a requirement in colleges of further education, similar arrangements should apply.

All 14-19 students are to be taught at least one of the following specifications:

- One of the full GCSE syllabuses in Religious Studies
- One of the short course GCSE syllabuses in Religious Studies
- A certificate in Religious Education offered by one of the awarding bodies/examination boards such as an Entry Level Certificate
- The ASDAN COPE Programme is another way of meeting these requirements.

Best practice is to follow an examination course where Christianity and one other religion (Islam is recommended by the Agreed Syllabus Conference) are studied. This should build on and reinforce previous work. The standards required in the syllabus are unlikely to be met unless students receive at least 70 hours of tuition time for their KS4 RE (This is usually made up of 40 hours in Y10 and 30 hours in Y11). Full GCSE courses require much more time. There is no requirement for schools to enter students for these awards, though many Wakefield schools do so, and the benefits of accreditation are clear.

### **16-19 RE for all**

In the schools and colleges to which the syllabus applies, there must be provision for Religious Education for pupils aged 16-19 in line with the law. The allocation of curriculum time for RE should be clearly identifiable and should avoid tokenism. At this stage, learning opportunities should be focused upon a range of religions and views of life appropriate to the students and the selected curriculum content.

Provision for those who take AS and A2 qualifications, vocational qualifications and other qualifications must enable students to progress their understanding of spiritual, ethical, religious and philosophical questions in line with the 14-16 requirements of the syllabus. Provision through general studies, critical thinking, enrichment course and day conferences can all be effective in line with the legal requirements.

### **Managing provision for Religious Education 16-19**

There is a wide variety of ways the requirement for RE 16-19 can be met. These include:

- A unit in General Studies
- A part of an enrichment programme of studies
- An integrated approach to religious and moral aspects of a vocational course
- A unit within Citizenship
- A critical thinking course which uses content from religion and ethics
- A key skills introduction course
- A day conference on a religious or spiritual theme for a whole cohort of students
- A community engagement programme – including for example visits with younger pupils to places of worship

<b>Suggestions for a programme of study</b> <b>Students could be taught</b>	<b>Learning from religion (AT2)</b> <b>Examples of questions to build in to students' learning:</b>
<p><b>1. Belief and religion: identity, values and community.</b>            Students could learn about some diverse ways in which religion shapes communities on a global and local scale, including inter faith issues and the insights to be found from sociology and psychology into values and identities, so that they can give well informed and well argued accounts of their own ideas about religion, globalisation and a range of challenges faced by plural societies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ What do religious ideas of community such as Ummah, Sangha, and Fellowship have to say about human community?</li> <li>■ In what ways are they relevant to the UK's plural and secular society and its religious communities?</li> <li>■ Can a person choose to be a global citizen? What might this mean?</li> <li>■ How can different religious and ethnic groups build a society for the wellbeing of all? What is the value of inter religious dialogue?</li> <li>■ In what ways can religious values influence individuals in society?</li> <li>■ Is moral autonomy valuable?</li> <li>■ What are my own ultimate values?</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Behaviour and religion: ethics and ultimate values.</b>            Students could learn about the diversity of ethical understandings in the UK today, and the ways ethics are applied to issues in sexuality, politics, justice, reconciliation, minority rights or medical science, so that they can analyse ethical language and consequences in the light of a range of religious and other views.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ What can I learn from Biblical ethics of love? Islamic ethics and shariah? The idea of harmlessness in Hindu teaching?</li> <li>■ What influences me in regard to what is right and wrong?</li> <li>■ What is ethical relativism? What impacts does it have on society?</li> <li>■ What contributes to justice and equality in the UK or globally?</li> <li>■ What is the nature of evil? What reduces or limits evil?</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Ways of seeing the world and religion: Philosophy, citizenship and politics.</b>            Students could learn about the impact of key world views upon community and national life, drawing upon insights from economics, philosophy, history and social science so that they can develop well informed and reasoned judgements about contemporary religious and moral perspectives in a philosophical context, and in relation to a range of national and cultural settings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ What do philosophy and religion have to say about life's meaning?</li> <li>■ What kinds of meanings and purposes do people find in life?</li> <li>■ Why do 400 rich people control half the world's wealth? Is this good?</li> <li>■ What is the future of religion in the contemporary world and in the UK?</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Ultimate values and commitments: religion, worship and belonging.</b>            Students could learn about different interpretations of human identity, including perspectives from religion, psychology and science, examining the ways in which humans create, interpret and express their ultimate values, so that they could analyse and account for responses to ideas such as worship, the sanctity of life, the meanings of sexuality and parenthood or the value of the individual in a comprehensive religious and philosophical context.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ What commitments make for my wellbeing with regard to sexuality, family, and community?</li> <li>■ What values matter most to me? Why?</li> <li>■ Why is hypocrisy such a prevalent phenomenon?</li> <li>■ What is the difference between 'I-it' relationships and 'I-thou' relationships (Martin Buber's terms).</li> <li>■ Does humanity need God, worship and religion, or not?</li> </ul>

Many other topics for study can be shaped to the learning needs of students in RE in this age group. These could include:

- Religion in the arts
- Religion and medical ethics
- Plural world: inter-religious dialogue. Can we seek the truth together?
- Study in depth of a key religious text
- Anthropology and religion
- Introduction to the philosophy of religion
- Christianity in the 21st Century
- Genocide: will it happen again?
- Feminism, gender and religion
- Faith in music: exploring the ways music is used for spirituality
- Peaceful futures? Religion and reconciliation.

## Expectations, assessment and reporting in RE

### An eight-level scale of expectations for the Wakefield RE Agreed Syllabus, KS1–3

Teaching and learning in RE should follow the expectations outlined in each school's Teaching and Learning policy. As with all teaching, the objectives as given in the programme of study should be clearly stated at the outset of the lesson. These should be provided in written and verbal format in a way that is appropriate to the age and ability of the pupils and available for learners to refer to throughout the lesson.

The teacher should revisit the objective during the lesson and the objective and learning outcomes should be reviewed in the plenary. Pupils should be encouraged to reflect on what they have learned so that they and the teacher can evaluate the progress made by groups and individuals. The teacher should build on this evaluation to plan the next steps in learning for the class as a whole and any groups or individuals.

This reflection and evaluation will support the assessment of pupils learning in RE.

### Assessment for learning described for teachers of RE

This description of assessment for learning may be helpful for teachers who are seeking to develop better practice in continuous assessment

**“Assessment for Learning is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there.”**

The quote is taken from the Principles of Assessment for learning, produced by the Assessment Reform Group in 1998. This helpful document identifies 10 principles, applied to RE below. RE in the Wakefield MDC Agreed Syllabus specially needs assessment for learning to clarify standards, plan progression and enable learners to see the progress they are making.

Assessment for learning in RE:

- *Is part of effective planning:* teachers plan lessons with assessment criteria from the RE eight-level scale in mind. These criteria should be shared with learners in classroom friendly language and in feedback on work related to the criteria.
- *Focuses on how students learn:* lesson planning should take into account the study and thinking skills students need to acquire and practice in order to complete tasks as much as - even more than - subject content. The skills of RE thus inform assessment.
- *Is central to classroom practice:* in lessons where teachers talk with students about their learning and make decisions together about the next steps forward, good assessment practice is already taking place. Learning how to learn in RE (metacognition) becomes more significant than merely learning new words about religions.
- *Is a key professional skill:* teachers need to be given opportunities to develop their understanding of RE assessment in initial and continuing professional development. The syllabus guidance on assessment provides some first steps for this. An extensive set of

exemplary 'I can...' statements are provided on the Agreed Syllabus disc of support materials.

- *Is sensitive and constructive*: diagnostic marking should reflect on the work, not the person. Confidence and enthusiasm for learning in RE should be built up, not dented by teacher comment. Assessment should emphasise progress and achievement in relation to specific RE objectives. Praise that is real is a motivator and an incentive.
- *Motivates*: evidence suggests that assessment can motivate learning when it protects learner autonomy, provides some choice and constructive feedback, creates opportunity for self-direction. Avoiding a repeated 'failure and blame' cycle is a key sensitivity in RE's uses of assessment for learning.
- *Promotes understanding of goals and criteria*: learners will increasingly understand what they are trying to achieve when they are involved in setting goals and identifying criteria. The criteria need to be expressed in the grassroots, classroom friendly language of 'I can...', so that pupils know increasingly clearly what progress in RE means for them.
- *Helps learners know how to improve*: learners need clear and specific feedback in order to improve their work. Setting targets for improvement to pupils, using comment-only marking is most effective, especially when related to the specific RE objectives of a task or unit of work.
- *Develops the capacity for self-assessment*: by involving learners in weighing up their own skills through peer and self assessment in RE.
- *Recognises all educational achievement*: the positive emphasis in assessment for learning can enable any pupil - all pupils - of all abilities to see progress in their work in RE.

### Using the eight-level scale

The key indicators of attainment in RE are contained in the two attainment targets, AT1 (Learning about religion and exploring human experience) and AT2 (Learning from religion and responding to human experience).

In this syllabus, the purposes of assessing RE are to be those concerned to inform teaching and learning. There is no intention to use RE assessment information for purposes associated with comparability or accountability. Assessment in RE is for learning.

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) has developed a national eight-level scale for Religious Education, published in 2004 as part of the DCSF non-statutory National Framework for RE to assist SACREs and Agreed Syllabus Conferences. The eight-level scale given below is based upon the QCA work, but is distinctive to the Wakefield Agreed Syllabus.

QCA (2004) identifies the field of enquiry for RE as:

- learning about religion (knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs, teachings, practices and lifestyles and of ways of expressing meaning);
- learning from religion (the skills of asking and responding to questions of identity, diversity, belonging, experience, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments).

This is compatible with the description of the field of enquiry identified by the Wakefield Agreed Syllabus Conference, represented in this syllabus.

This syllabus requires schools to assess and report to parents upon pupils' attainment and progress in Religious Education annually and at the end of each of key stages 1-4, in line with national reporting requirements. Schools are not however required to use the scale given below. If a school decides not to use the scale, other appropriate ways of reporting each pupil's attainment and progress, consistent with the syllabus overall, must be put in place.

The use of the levels to inform expectations about what children will achieve at particular key stages should be approached with caution: the syllabus assumes a minimum of 5% of curriculum time for RE, and where this is not allowed, achievement will surely be affected. Nonetheless, where provision is in line with the requirements of the syllabus, a very large proportion of children's achievements may be expected to be as follows:

- **Key Stage 1:** Pupils will be working from levels one to three. The expectation is that most pupils will be achieving at level two at the end of key stage one.
- **Key Stage 2:** Pupils will be working from levels two to five. The expectation is that most pupils will be achieving at level four at the end of key stage two.
- **Key Stage 3:** Pupils will be working from levels three to seven. The expectation is that most pupils will be achieving at level six at the end of key stage three. By the end of Y9, some high achieving pupils will be achieving at level eight, and a small number will register exceptional performance.
- For pupils and students in the **14-19 age range**, teachers' expectations, assessment and reporting to parents may be informed by the eight-level scale, and by GCSE and A-level RS grade descriptors from the appropriate awarding bodies.

### Guidance on using the eight-level scale

1. The professional judgement of the teacher of RE about the pupils' achievements is the most important factor in the assessment process.
2. The Agreed Syllabus eight-level scale for RE is to be used to set high standards of learning. It is intended to provide teachers with a supportive professional tool, and to enable teachers to be confident in their RE work.
3. Pupils may achieve different levels with regard to AT1 and AT2 in RE. In these cases, schools should level the achievements in consistent ways.
4. In planning, teachers will find that using the levels provides helpful focus for a differentiated curriculum that enables continuity and progression towards the highest possible standards for each pupil.
5. Learning activities planned for particular classes will often focus upon a small or particular aspect of pupils' attainment, or a single phrase within the level descriptor. Again, the teacher's professional judgement is central to monitoring pupils' progress.
6. It is good practice, when assigning a level to a piece of evidence of a pupil's achievement to base the decision upon the teacher's judgement of the 'best fit' description. A single piece of work will only rarely show achievement with reference to the whole of the level descriptor.
7. Pupils will usually demonstrate some parts or aspects of a level before they can consistently and securely achieve all that the

- level descriptor includes. They are working towards the levels described.
8. Teachers working together, for example in the same school, or in a 'pyramid' family or cluster of schools, will often find it helpful to discuss the application of the levels to pupils' work.
  9. There are some significant difficulties attached to using the levels for regular feedback to children about their week-to-week work. For example, there is little incentive in getting 'level three' week after week, and pupils will not learn much from such general feedback. Teachers are encouraged to give pupils informative, clear and diagnostic feedback, specific to RE objectives, through the ongoing marking of work. Setting targets for improvement is effective.
  10. Schools may judge that it is appropriate to report levels to parents at the end of each year or key stage.
  11. This Syllabus requires schools to give parents an annual report on each child's attainment and progress in Religious Education, but use of the levels is not statutory.
  12. RE has important aspects which are not open to individual assessment. These include RE's contributions to providing opportunities for spiritual development, or to developing positive attitudes to those who hold different beliefs to oneself. The Agreed Syllabus recognises this. Schools may want to find ways to credit and celebrate such achievements.

### **Objectives and success criteria**

Good standards in Religious Education flow from the matching of objectives and success criteria to the learning needs of classes and individual pupils. The eight-level scale, and its accompanying guidance materials, provides the material teachers need to set lesson objectives and learning intentions for pupils to progress. The 'I can...' statements (in the guidance section of the syllabus) model the use of the scale for setting success criteria for assessments and learning intentions for lesson by lesson progression. Objectives set at the start of the lesson, explained to pupils, and reviewed with pupils at the end of each lesson are the building blocks of progression towards high standards in RE.

## The Wakefield RE eight-level scale 2007

Level Description	Attainment target 1: Learning about religion and human experience	Attainment target 2: Learning from religion and human experience In the light of their learning about religions:
<p><b>1</b> Recognising and talking about religion</p>	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ use some religious words and phrases to recognise and name features of religious life and practice;</li> <li>■ can recall religious stories, actions, and celebrations and recognise religious symbols, words, gestures and artefacts.</li> </ul>	<p>Pupils express and talk about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ their own experiences, feelings and celebrations;</li> <li>■ what they find interesting or puzzling;</li> <li>■ what is of value and concern to themselves and to others.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2</b> Retelling stories, identifying religious materials and asking questions</p>	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ use religious words and phrases to identify some features of religion and its importance for some people;</li> <li>■ begin to show awareness of similarities in religions;</li> <li>■ retell and suggest meanings for religious stories, actions and symbols;</li> <li>■ identify how religion is expressed in different ways.</li> </ul>	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ ask, and respond sensitively to, questions about their own and others' experiences and feelings;</li> <li>■ recognise that some questions cause people to wonder and are difficult to answer;</li> <li>■ in relation to matters of right and wrong, recognise their own values and those of others.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3</b> Describing religion and making links to their own experience</p>	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ use a developing religious vocabulary to describe some key features of religions, recognising similarities and differences;</li> <li>■ make links between beliefs and sources, including religious stories and sacred texts;</li> <li>■ begin to identify the impact religion has on believers' lifestyles;</li> <li>■ describe some forms of religious expression.</li> </ul>	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ identify what influences them, making links between aspects of their own and others' experiences;</li> <li>■ ask important questions about religious beliefs and lifestyles, linking their own and others' responses;</li> <li>■ make links between values and commitments, and their own attitudes and behaviour.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4</b> Showing understanding of religion and applying ideas themselves</p>	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ use developing religious vocabulary to describe and show understanding of sources, authorities, practices, beliefs, lifestyles, ideas, feelings and experiences;</li> <li>■ make links between them, and describe some similarities and differences both within and between religions;</li> <li>■ describe the impact of religion on people's lifestyles;</li> <li>■ suggest meanings for a range of forms of religious expression.</li> </ul>	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ raise and suggest answers to questions of sacredness, identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments;</li> <li>■ apply their ideas to their own and other people's lives simply;</li> <li>■ describe what inspires and influences themselves and others.</li> </ul>

Level Description	Attainment target 1: Learning about religion and human experience	Attainment target 2: Learning from religion and human experience In the light of their learning about religions:
<p>5</p> <p>Explaining the impact of religion and expressing their own views of religious questions</p>	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ use an increasingly wide religious vocabulary to explain the impact of beliefs upon individuals and communities;</li> <li>■ describe why people belong to religions;</li> <li>■ know that similarities and differences illustrate distinctive beliefs within and between religions and suggest possible reasons for this;</li> <li>■ explain how religious sources are used to provide authoritative answers to ultimate questions and ethical issues, recognising diversity in forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression, within and between religions.</li> </ul>	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ pose and suggest answers to, questions of sacredness, identity, belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, values and commitments, relating them to their own and others' lives;</li> <li>■ explain what inspires and influences them, expressing their own and others' views on the challenges of belonging to a religion.</li> </ul>
<p>6</p> <p>Explaining and interpreting religion and expressing their own insights</p>	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ use religious and philosophical vocabulary to explain religions and beliefs, explaining reasons for diversity within and between them;</li> <li>■ explain why the impact of religions and beliefs upon individuals, communities and societies varies;</li> <li>■ interpret sources and arguments, explaining different answers, from different traditions to ultimate questions and ethical issues;</li> <li>■ interpret the significance of different forms of religious spiritual and moral expression.</li> </ul>	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ use reasoning and example to express insights into the relationships between beliefs, authorities teachings and world issues;</li> <li>■ express insight into their own and others' views on questions of sacredness, identity and belonging, meaning, purpose and truth;</li> <li>■ consider the challenges of belonging to a religion in the contemporary world, focussing on values and commitments.</li> </ul>
<p>7</p> <p>Beginning to critically evaluate religious questions and evaluating responses to religious questions insightfully</p>	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ use a religious and philosophical vocabulary to show a coherent understanding of a range of religions and beliefs;</li> <li>■ show a coherent understanding of issues, values and questions of authority, meaning and truth;</li> <li>■ account for the influence of history and culture on aspects of religious life and practice;</li> <li>■ account for differences between people within the same religion or tradition;</li> <li>■ show a coherent understanding of how religion, spirituality and ethics are studied.</li> </ul>	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ evaluate with insight questions of meaning, purpose and truth and ethical issues;</li> <li>■ evaluate the significance of religious and other views for understanding questions of human relationships, sacredness, belonging, identity, society, values and commitments, using appropriate evidence and examples.</li> </ul>

Level Description	Attainment target 1: Learning about religion and human experience	Attainment target 2: Learning from religion and human experience In the light of their learning about religions:
<p><b>8</b> <b>Analysing and contextualising their understanding of religion and justifying their views</b></p>	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>use a religious and philosophical vocabulary to analyse</b> a range of religions and beliefs;</li> <li>■ <b>analyse religious material</b> with reference to historical, cultural and social contexts;</li> <li>■ <b>critically evaluate the impact</b> of religions and beliefs on differing communities and societies;</li> <li>■ <b>analyse differing interpretations</b> of religious spiritual and moral sources and authorities, <b>using some of the principal methods</b> by which religion, spirituality and ethics are studied;</li> <li>■ <b>analyse varied forms</b> of religious spiritual and moral expression.</li> </ul>	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>justify their views on</b> a wide range of viewpoints on questions of sacredness, identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments;</li> <li>■ <b>justify their views about religious spiritual and ethical questions</b> from evidence, arguments, reflections and examples, providing a <b>detailed evaluation</b> into the perspectives of others.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Exceptional Performance</b> <b>Synthesise effectively and draw balanced conclusions</b></p>	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>use a complex religious, moral and philosophical vocabulary</b> to provide a consistent and detailed analysis of religions and beliefs;</li> <li>■ <b>evaluate in depth</b> the importance of religious diversity in a plural society;</li> <li>■ <b>clearly recognise</b> the extent to which the impact of religion and beliefs on different communities and societies has changed over time;</li> <li>■ <b>provide a detailed analysis</b> of how religious, spiritual and moral sources are interpreted in different ways, <b>evaluating</b> the principal methods by which religion and spirituality are studied;</li> <li>■ <b>synthesise effectively</b> their accounts of the varied forms of religious spiritual and moral expression.</li> </ul>	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>analyse in depth</b> a wide range of perspectives on questions of identity and belonging, meaning, purpose and truth and values and commitments;</li> <li>■ <b>give independent, well informed and highly reasoned insights</b> into their own and others perspectives on religious and spiritual issues, providing <b>well-substantiated and balanced conclusions</b>.</li> </ul>

Additional guidance and support materials on the use of the eight-level scale, including a set of exemplary 'I can...' statements, can be found in the guidance section of the syllabus.

## A ladder of key skills for assessing RE

This simple ladder uses skill terms extracted from the eight-level scale. The ladder intends to clarify and make explicit the progression of skills which the Agreed Syllabus uses to enable all pupils to achieve in RE. It is to be used with reference to the full text of the scale.

Good teaching will share the appropriate skills with pupils and make explicit opportunities, through well designed learning opportunities for pupils to acquire, practice and develop these central skills in RE. The use of numbered levels with pupils should be sparing, reflecting the best practice of assessment for learning.

	Learning about religion	Learning from religion
8	Analysing and contextualising their understanding of religion	Justifying their views comprehensively
7	Beginning to critically evaluate religious questions	Evaluating responses to religious questions insightfully
6	Explaining and interpreting religion	Expressing their own insights into varied religious questions
5	Explaining the impact of religion	Expressing their own views of varied religious questions
4	Showing understanding of religion	Applying ideas for themselves
3	Describing religion	Making links to their own experience
2	Retelling religious stories, identifying religious materials	Asking questions, responding sensitively
1	Recognising religious materials	Talking about religion and experience

## Wakefield RE: Achievements for pupils with special educational needs:

Pre-level 1 'performance descriptors', known as 'P' levels, describe achievements for pupils working below level 1. These Wakefield MDC levels, developed from 'P' levels for RE published by the QCA, describe the expectations and progression for pupils working below level 1. They are intended to guide the planning of teachers of pupils with a range of special educational needs.

Performance Descriptions for pupils achieving below level one in RE <i>Pupils...</i>		Summary
P1 (i)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ encounter activities and experiences.</li> <li>■ may be passive or resistant.</li> <li>■ may show simple reflex responses, e.g. startling at sudden noises or movements. Any participation is fully prompted</li> </ul>	<b>Encounter</b> (pupils present during activity)
P1 (ii)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ show emerging awareness of activities &amp; experiences.</li> <li>■ may have periods when they appear alert and ready to focus their attention on certain people, events, objects or parts of objects e.g. becoming still in response to silence.</li> <li>■ may give intermittent reactions e.g. vocalising occasionally during group celebrations and acts of worship</li> </ul>	<b>Awareness</b> (fleeting focus)
P2 (i)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ begin to respond consistently to familiar people, events and objects. They react to new activities and experiences e.g. briefly looking around in unfamiliar environments.</li> <li>■ begin to show interest in people, events and objects e.g. leaning towards the source of a light, sound or scent.</li> <li>■ accept and engage in co-active exploration e.g. touching a range of religious artefacts and objects in partnership with a member of staff.</li> </ul>	<b>Attention and response</b> (deliberate but inconsistent)
P2 (ii)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ begin to be proactive in their interactions.</li> <li>■ communicate consistent preferences and affective responses e.g. showing that they have enjoyed an experience or interaction.</li> <li>■ recognise familiar people, events and objects e.g. becoming quiet and attentive during a certain piece of music.</li> <li>■ perform actions, often by trial and improvement, and they remember learned responses over short periods of time e.g. repeating a simple action with an artefact.</li> <li>■ co-operate with shared exploration and supported participation e.g. performing gestures during ritual exchanges with another person performing gestures.</li> </ul>	
P3 (i)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ begin to communicate intentionally.</li> <li>■ seek attention through eye contact, gesture or action.</li> <li>■ request events or activities e.g. prompting a visitor to prolong an interaction.</li> <li>■ participate in shared activities with less support.</li> <li>■ sustain concentration for short periods.</li> <li>■ explore materials in increasingly complex ways e.g. stroking or shaking artefacts and objects.</li> <li>■ observe the results of their own actions with interest e.g. when vocalising in a quiet place.</li> <li>■ remember learned responses over more extended periods e.g. following a familiar ritual and responding appropriately</li> </ul>	<b>Participation</b> (with support)

Performance Descriptions for pupils achieving below level one in RE <i>Pupils...</i>		Summary
P3 (ii)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ use emerging conventional communication.</li> <li>■ greet known people and may initiate interactions and activities e.g. prompting an adult to sing or play a favourite song.</li> <li>■ can remember learned responses over increasing periods of time and may anticipate known events e.g. celebrating their peers achievements in assembly.</li> <li>■ may respond to options and choices with actions or gestures e.g. choosing to participate in activities.</li> <li>■ actively explore objects and events for more extended periods e.g. contemplating the flickering of a candle flame.</li> <li>■ apply potential solutions systematically to problems e.g. passing an artefact to a peer in order to prompt participation in a group activity.</li> </ul>	<b>Awareness</b> (memory, responsive)
P4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ use single elements of communication e.g. words, gestures, signs or symbols, to express their feelings.</li> <li>■ show they understand 'yes' and 'no'.</li> <li>■ begin to respond to the feelings of others e.g. matching their emotions and laughing when another pupil is laughing.</li> <li>■ join in with activities by initiating ritual actions and sounds.</li> <li>■ demonstrate an appreciation of stillness and quiet.</li> </ul>	<b>Involvement</b> (active/intentional)
P5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ respond appropriately to simple questions about familiar religious events or experiences and communicate simple meanings.</li> <li>■ respond to a variety of new religious experiences e.g. involving music, drama, colour, lights, food or tactile objects.</li> <li>■ take part in activities involving two or three other learners.</li> <li>■ may also engage in moments of individual reflection.</li> </ul>	
P6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ express and communicate their feelings in different ways.</li> <li>■ respond to others in group situations and co-operate when working in small groups.</li> <li>■ listen to, and begin to respond to, familiar religious stories, poems and music, and make their own contribution to celebrations and festivals.</li> <li>■ carry out ritualised actions in familiar circumstances.</li> <li>■ show concern and sympathy for others in distress e.g. through gestures, facial expressions or by offering comfort.</li> <li>■ start to be aware of their own influence on events and other people.</li> </ul>	<b>Gaining skills and understanding</b>
P7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ listen to and follow religious stories.</li> <li>■ can communicate their ideas about religion, life events and experiences in simple phrases.</li> <li>■ can evaluate their own work and behaviour in simple ways, beginning to identify some actions as right and wrong on the basis of consequences.</li> <li>■ can find out about aspects of religion through stories, music, or drama, answer questions and communicate their responses.</li> <li>■ may communicate their feelings about what is special to them e.g. through role play.</li> <li>■ can begin to understand that other people have needs and to respect these.</li> <li>■ can make purposeful relationships with others in group activity.</li> </ul>	

Performance Descriptions for pupils achieving below level one in RE		Summary
<i>Pupils...</i>		
P8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ can listen attentively to religious stories or to people talking about religion.</li> <li>■ can begin to understand that religious and other stories carry moral and religious meaning.</li> <li>■ are increasingly able to communicate ideas, feelings or responses to experiences or retell religious stories.</li> <li>■ can communicate simple facts about religion and important people in religions.</li> <li>■ can begin to realise the significance of religious artefacts, symbols and places.</li> <li>■ can reflect on what makes them happy, sad, excited or lonely.</li> <li>■ are able to demonstrate a basic understanding of what is right and wrong in familiar situations.</li> <li>■ are often sensitive to the needs and feelings of others and show respect for themselves and others.</li> <li>■ treat living things and their environment with care and concern.</li> </ul>	Gaining skills and understanding

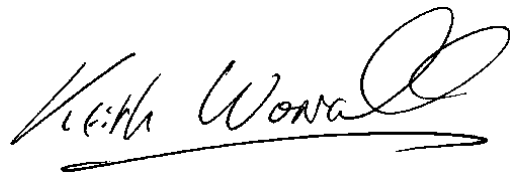
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