Sheffield Agreed Syllabus for
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

September 2009

Sheffield *where everyone matters*

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Sheffield
City Council

Foreword

We, in Sheffield, take great pride in and place tremendous importance upon the multi-cultural, multi-faith nature of our City. We have also long recognised and respected the unique contribution of Religious Education in promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children and young people. The exploration of belief, faith and values and their relationship with personal and collective morality is of fundamental importance to individuals and to society. Religious Education can be both controversial and demanding in dealing with what people believe and that which may affect them at a deep and personal level.

We have worked very hard in Sheffield and we believe with a great deal of success to achieve understanding of the educational validity of Religious Education for children and young people in schools. In the current local, national and global context, it is clear that citizens in the 21st Century, require knowledge and understanding of religious concepts, the ability to analyse and interpret these and attitudinal development which whilst recognizing difference in aspects of faith and culture, for example, also recognises similarity in what it means to be human, which is the same for us all.

Crucial to the understandings and the standards achieved is the effectiveness of the Sheffield Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) which is well-established, with a good balance of faith community representatives, serving teachers and elected members. Relationship is key to achieving mutual understanding and respect. Sheffield SACRE is a mechanism which forges consensus, knowledge, understanding and relationship across faith boundaries, communities and schools and which embraces and respects the importance of local ownership, involvement and development.

We are grateful to all those who gave their time, energy and commitment in the review of our Agreed Syllabus, which we commend to you as a major and very positive contribution to the development of Religious Education in the City.

Dr Sonia Sharp
Executive Director:
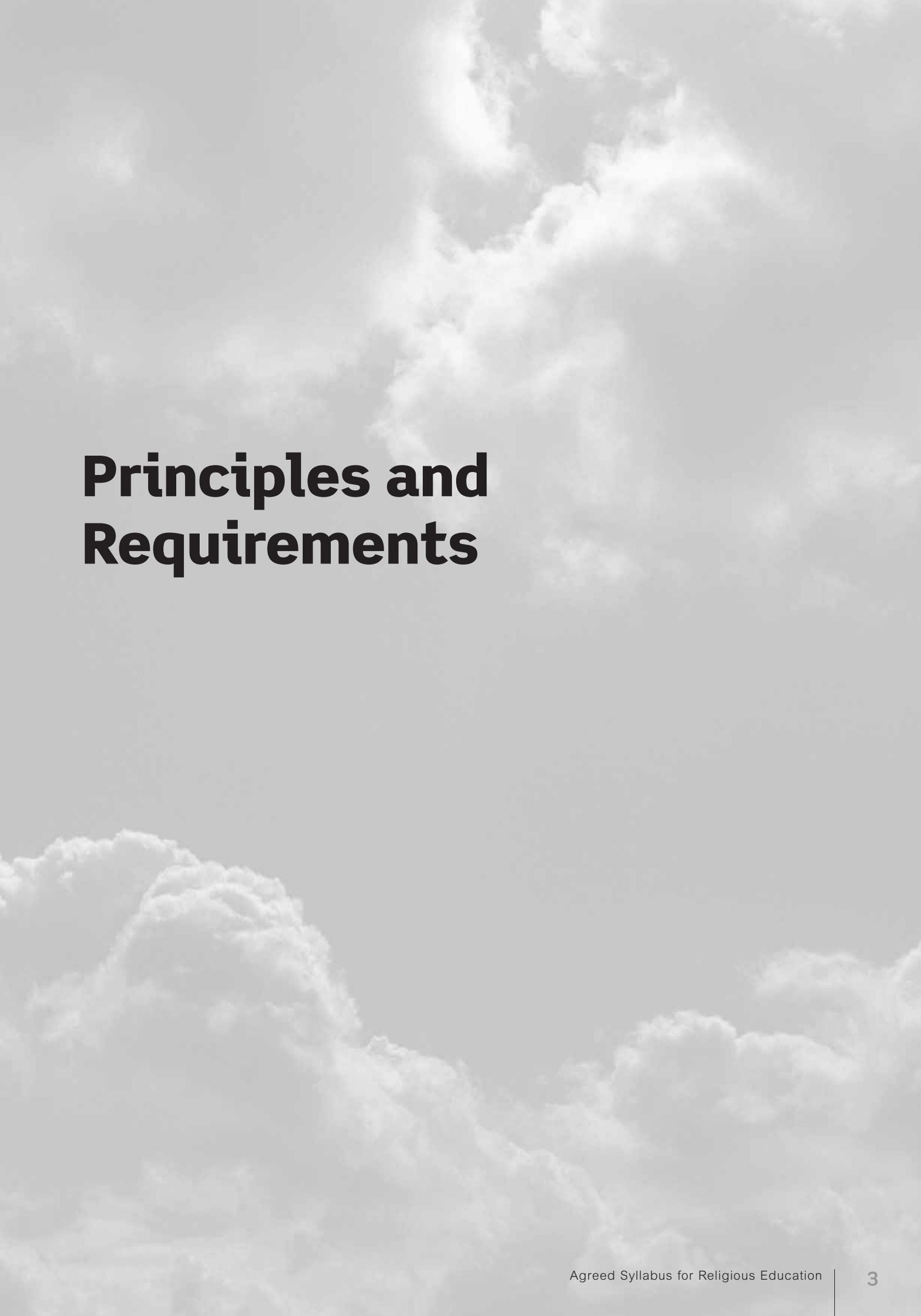Children and Young Peoples Directorate

Councillor Andrew Sangar
Cabinet Member:
Children's Services and Lifelong
Learning

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Contents

Principles and Requirements

The Legal Framework and Statutory Requirements for Religious Education in Sheffield

The statutory requirements for the delivery and inspection of Religious Education in schools are to be found in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and the Education Act 2002.

The requirements of the Sheffield Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education form the legal and educational basis for RE within all maintained schools across the Local Authority area with the exception of Voluntary Aided Schools with a Religious Character.

To reflect the national context, and the entitlement of pupils to effective religious education at national standards, elements from the national non-statutory guidance have been incorporated where appropriate as part of the statutory requirement of this Syllabus.

Religious Education must be taught in accordance with this Locally Agreed Syllabus, approved by the Agreed Syllabus Conference and agreed by the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) for Sheffield. It has been recommended to the Local Authority, who have adopted it as the syllabus for Religious Education for Sheffield schools.

Head Teachers are required to confirm compliance with this Agreed Syllabus in the box provided in their School Self-Evaluation Form.

To fulfill these requirements Religious Education shall:

1. be distinct and separate from collective worship.

2. be provided for all pupils aged 4 -19 on the school roll from reception classes through to sixth forms. The statutory requirements shall not apply to nursery schools or nursery classes in primary schools, or 6th form age pupils in institutions of further education. However, Religious Education may be explored within the six areas of learning and the early learning goals of the foundation stage.

3. be taught to pupils in special schools 'as far as is practicable'.

4. be allocated 5% curriculum time in all schools. This may be: taught as a discrete lesson each week; blocked around topics, themes or seasons; or in any way that is effective.

5. reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. This is taken to mean that Christianity shall be studied for at least 51% of RE curriculum time each year.

6. provide opportunities for all pupils to study each of the other 5 major world religions (Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism) at least once in each Key Stage. This may be waived at Key Stages one, four and five. At Key Stages 4 and 5 religions may be studied through philosophical and ethical issues.

7. ensure opportunities for pupils to study religions represented in Sheffield.

8. not be denominational in character, though teaching about the origin and variation of denominational differences is appropriate.

9. assess in a way that is valid, rigorous, and for a range of purposes, including assessment for learning. The level descriptors and performance descriptions given on pages 25 to 34 shall be used to assess and report pupils' progress.

10. be subject to Office for Standards in Education (OfSTED) and Local Authority inspections.

Educational priorities in Sheffield

The key features of raising attainment and aspiration in Sheffield are:

1. Leadership and Management

2. Teaching and Learning

3. Assessment

4. Parents and Families

Religious Education shall raise attainment and aspiration by:

1a. informing School Management of the legal framework and statutory requirements for Religious Education so RE is supported in fostering the entitlement to personal, social, cultural, spiritual and intellectual development of pupils of all backgrounds and abilities.

1b. providing RE Subject Leaders and Co-ordinators with clear principles and requirements from which to align their departmental policies and action plans with the school's improvement plans. This syllabus provides a framework for School Management and Subject Leaders to monitor the subject, and make reporting to pupils, school, parents and the Local Authority more effective.

2a. providing RE Subject Leaders with a coherent planning and assessment framework to draw up their Schemes of Work so that teaching and learning will be more effective. This framework follows national expectations and sets standards that support national strategies and local priorities. A focus on making RE interesting by relating topics to pupils' own experience of life will encourage curiosity and motivate pupils to see learning as a normal part of their life, and so raise aspiration and attainment.

2b. promoting meaningful RE by studying what it is to be human from the perspectives of the world's cultural heritage. This will offer insights and understanding to pupils of all abilities, and so promote self-esteem and stimulate motivation, participation and attainment. As an academic subject RE will support the school curriculum and national strategies by developing literacy, creative thinking, and links to other subjects.

3. providing an assessment procedure that is valid, rigorous, easy to operate and fully compatible with the assessment procedures for other school subjects. Using national levels will raise the status of Religious Education within school, and the aspirations of pupils and parents. This assessment of learning framework is a very suitable basis for assessment for learning which will promote personalised learning to raise aspirations and achievement.

4. developing a range of social, academic and thinking skills so that pupils may formulate reasoned opinions and arguments and participate effectively in decision making. This will contribute to their success at school, with their families, and in their neighbourhood.

Core values of Sheffield SACRE

Religious Education shall:

- ensure that all pupils in our schools develop socially, culturally, morally, academically, emotionally and spiritually so that they are able to understand themselves, understand others and develop a wide range of skills to benefit from and cope with the opportunities, challenges and responsibilities of living in a rapidly changing world.

- be an inclusive process that promotes knowledge, understanding and the development of a range of skills as well as personal development. Religious Education must therefore be open to all pupils, and has to be taught in a climate of open enquiry. It must not promote any particular religion or beliefs as 'the right way'. Rather it must enable pupils to understand their own faith or beliefs and to learn from their study of different faiths and beliefs.

- enable all children and young people to:

1   understand the nature, role and influence of religion in the world.

2   pursue a personal quest for meaning, purpose and value.

3   formulate and express reasoned opinion/argument.

4   understand and have respect for different beliefs and life-styles.

The Whole School Curriculum

The precise ways that Religious Education will support the following National Expectations can be downloaded from www.curriculum.qca.org.uk These expectations can be used to align the subject's action plan to the School's improvement plans:

Religious Education shall support:

The Aims, Purposes and values of the School Curriculum (Education Act 2002)

Purposes include:

- promoting the social, spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of learners at the school and within society.

- preparing learners for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

Values include:

- the self, relationships, the diversity in our society, and the environment.

Curriculum Aims include enabling all young people to become:

- successful learners.

- confident individuals.

- responsible citizens.

RE Personal Development and Every Child Matters by enabling all pupils to:

- enjoy and achieve.

- be healthy.

- stay safe.

- make a positive contribution.

- achieve economic wellbeing.

RE and Personal Learning and thinking skills by promoting pupils as:

- independent enquirers.

- creative thinkers.

- team workers.

- self-managers.

- effective participators.

- reflective learners.

Inclusion in RE by:

- including all learners (making topics relevant to their lives).

- setting suitable learning challenges (providing opportunities to succeed).

- overcoming potential barriers to learning for individuals and groups of pupils.

# The Importance of Religious Education to pupils

Religious Education, as explained in National Guidance from QCA, shall:

1. provoke 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.

2. develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, other religious traditions, and other beliefs that offer answers to these challenging questions.

3. offer opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development.

4. enhance 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.

5. encourage learning from different religions, beliefs, values and traditions while exploring pupils' own beliefs and questions.

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

7. encourage pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging.

8. enable pupils to flourish individually within their communities and as citizens of a diverse society and global community.

9. have an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning.

10. develop pupils' respect for and sensitivity to others, in particular those whose faith is different from their own.

11. promote discernment and enable pupils to combat prejudice.

In Addition, Religious Education in Sheffield shall help pupils to:

1. understand the origin and development of religions, cultures and beliefs, and the nature and causes of religious and cultural diversity.

2. develop an understanding of the relationships between religious beliefs, practices, expression, identity and belonging, meaning purpose and truth, and values and commitments as they apply to religions and beliefs, and as they apply to human nature in general and to themselves in particular (these are the 6 key concepts on page 12).

3. develop and express insights into the significance and value of religion and other beliefs for human relationships personally, locally and globally.

4. develop an overview of what religions are, their role and the ways they are studied.

5. enhance cultural and multi-cultural awareness through developing insights into the context of the country in which they live and its diverse beliefs and cultures.

6. develop a range of academic, affective and personal skills and attitudes.

7. learn to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues.

8. develop an attitude of open-minded enquiry seeking after truth and meaning, taking a personal interest in the meaning and purpose of life, reconsidering existing views in the light of their learning, and valuing insight and imagination.

9. develop a language which enables them to:

    a. engage with the fundamental concepts of the world's religions and cultures.

    b. interpret a range of sources, texts, authorities and forms of religious and spiritual expression from a variety of contexts.

    c. analyse religious beliefs, arguments and ideas.

    d. articulate their own personal search for beliefs, a way of life, forms of expression, identity and belonging, meaning and purpose, and values and commitments.

    e. recognise the power and limitations of language.

10. enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by:

    a. developing awareness of the fundamental questions of life raised by human experiences, and of how religious and other teachings relate to them.

    b. responding to such questions with reference to the teaching and practices of religions, other beliefs, and to their own understanding and experience.

    c. reflecting on their own beliefs, practices, forms of expression, meaning purpose and truth, values and commitments, and experiences in the light of their study.

    d. expressing their beliefs, ideas and insights using a variety of forms of expression including creative forms and reasoned arguments.

11. understand and become involved in community cohesion by developing empathy and positive attitudes towards others, respecting others' rights to hold different beliefs from their own, and towards living in a society of diverse cultures.

12. support community cohesion by challenging ignorance, prejudice, inequality and racism, and promoting justice, truth, tolerance, sensitivity, fairness, compassion and humanity.

13. develop self-awareness and a mature and positive sense of self worth.

14. learn to work co-operatively with others and prepare for an adult life of work, relationships, continued personal development and as citizens of a diverse world.
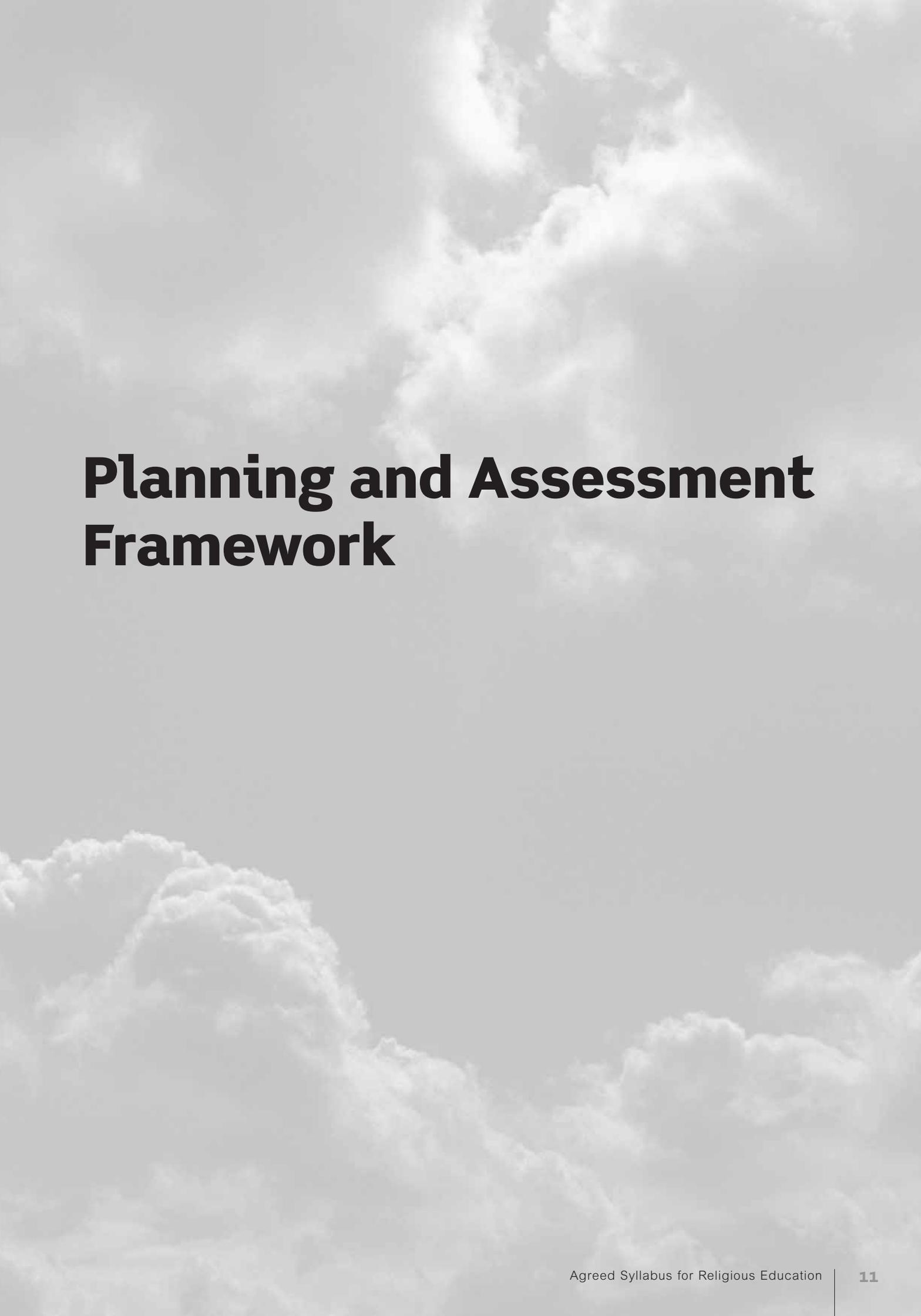
Planning and Assessment Framework

Key Concepts (Topics)

In planning topics for Units of Work and Lessons, Religious Education shall:

1. separate content into the 6 Key Concepts of:

   A Beliefs, teachings and sources   B Practices and ways of life

   C Expressing meaning   D Identity and belonging

   E Meaning, purpose and truth   F Values and commitments

2. make explicit the coherent links and interrelationships between these key concepts.

3. achieve a balance between Key Concepts within each Unit of Work, ensuring an overall balance between Units of Work, and at the Key Stage.

4. focus individual lessons on one or more Key Concepts, and/or the links between them.

5. acknowledge that not all features of all religions can be studied, so select topics from each religion that promote understanding of the Key Concepts and the links between them.

6. encourage pupils to see how each Key Concept and the links between them can be applied to people in general and to their own lives in particular.

7. give pupils an overview of what religions and beliefs are, and their role in helping to hold people together as individuals, families, communities, and societies.

8. draw on local resources, materials and people.

9. vary starting points for Units of Work between the conceptual (ideas, however expressed), ethnographic (practices), or psychological (common experience).

10. set learning objectives of knowledge, understanding and reflection (relating learning to pupils' own experience and understanding) in each Unit of Work, and in each lesson where appropriate so pupils may develop appropriate skills.

11. differentiate topics and level of complexity to remove barriers to learning, ensure relevance to pupils, and give opportunities for all pupils to achieve success.

Key Processes (Skills)

In planning Teaching and Learning activities, Religious Education shall:

1. develop pupils' skills to learn about and learn from religions in gaining knowledge and understanding of the world around them and of themselves.

2. set learning objectives of knowledge, understanding and reflecting (relating learning to pupils' own experiences of life) so pupils may develop the appropriate skills.

3. balance the Key Processes of learning about and learning from religions and beliefs across Units of Work and within individual lessons where appropriate.

4. design activities around the Key Processes so that pupils are given opportunities to understand the general concepts that can be applied to human life, the concepts common to many religions, and those that apply within specific religions and beliefs.

5. give pupils opportunities to learn the skill of applying their understanding of particular concepts to the context of their own life and understandings.

6. employ a wide range of learning skills, particularly discussion, literacy and the experiential. Specific thinking skills are outlined in page 14.

7. use the 'Progression of Skills and Understanding' statements outlined on pages 15 to 18 to plan activities appropriate to pupils' level of ability.

8. build assessment of levels of skills and understandings into Units of Work and Lesson Plans using the Planning and Assessment Framework on pages 25 to 34.

9. build in assessment for learning to ensure pupils know what skills, knowledge and understanding they have achieved, and what their next steps to improve may be so they know what to do and their learning is personalised.

10. include teaching the skills of self and peer assessment so that pupils may take ownership of and have an overview (meta-cognition) of their learning.

11. develop the skills of reflection and self awareness.

Thinking Skills

Religious Education shall give opportunities for pupils at each Key Stage to develop the skills of:

- observation and perception - noticing and applying knowledge and understanding.

- enquiry and Investigation - asking questions and gathering information and evidence.

- interpretation - understanding meaning in symbolism, language, beliefs and practices.

- imagination - applying curiosity and empathy in the search for understanding.

- reflection - considering feelings and thoughts in response to studies and experience.

- empathy - consideration of others' feelings and experience.

- evaluation - giving value to points of view supported by reason, evidence and argument, coming to a personal reasoned conclusion where appropriate.

- analysis - categorising, distinguishing between aspects, opinions, facts, and belief.

- inductive reasoning – inferring a law or principle from a number of instances. Finding the big pictures that explain the similarities and differences between details.

- deductive reasoning - deriving instances from principles. Inferring and explaining detailed phenomena with reference to religious and other principles.

- synthesis - linking features of religion and belief together in a coherent pattern, connecting different aspects of life, and linking topics to pupils' own experiences of life.

- bridging - making associations between areas of study, other subjects, and personal understanding and experience in school, the street, the family, with friends and in the media.

- expression - explanation, identifying and articulating a response in a range of media.

Progression of Skills and Understanding

The Key Processes of RE are the skills of learning about and learning from religions. When creating Units of Work and Lesson Plans, teachers can map each of the following requirements to the Key Concepts on page 12 to ensure coverage and balance.

Religious Education shall teach skills and understanding so that pupils can:

At Reception (Foundation Stage 2) and KS1

Learn about religions	Learn from religion
- 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	- 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 ideas - 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

At KS2

Learn about religions	Learn from religion
- describe the key aspects of religions, especially the people, stories and traditions that influence their beliefs and the 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 between and within religions - investigate the significance of religion in 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	- 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, recognizing 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

At KS3

Learn about religions	Learn from religion
- investigate the impact of religious beliefs and teachings on individuals, communities and societies, the reasons for commitment and the causes of diversity - 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 - explain religious beliefs, practices and commitments, including their transmission by people, texts and traditions - evaluate how religious beliefs and teachings inform answers to ultimate questions and ethical issues - interpret a range of sources, texts, authorities, and forms of religious and spiritual expression from a variety of contexts - analyse religious beliefs, arguments and ideas.	- reflect on the relationship between beliefs teachings, world issues and ultimate questions - evaluate beliefs, commitments and the impact of religion in the contemporary world - express insights into the significance and value of religion and other beliefs for human relationships personally, locally and globally - express their own beliefs and ideas, using a variety of forms of expression, including creative forms and reasoned arguments

At KS4 and 5

Learn about religions	Learn from religion
- investigate and interpret significant issues in the light of their own identities, experiences and commitments - present coherent, detailed arguments about beliefs, ethics, values and issues, with independence and critical awareness of their methods of study - use and develop specialist vocabulary and critical arguments, with awareness of their power, limitations and ambiguity - use and evaluate the rich, varied forms of creative expression in religious life	- reflect critically on their opinions in the light of their learning about religions, beliefs and questions - develop their independent values and attitudes on moral and spiritual issues related to their autonomy, identities, rights and responsibilities - evaluate issues, beliefs, commitments and the influence of religion, including philosophical, spiritual and ethical perspectives - use skills of critical enquiry, creative problem-solving and communication through a range of media to respond to issues of identity, meaning and values in a wide range of contexts

Range and Content

This section summarizes and adds to the content of Religious Education mentioned above.

Religious Education Schemes of Work shall include:

1. at Key Stage 2 and 3, Christianity and each of the other 5 main religions of the world at least once in each Key Stage. At Reception, KS 1, 4 and 5 Christianity and one or more of the other main religions of the world.

2. less populous religions and cultures, religions that are now historic, and other beliefs.

3. opportunities for pupils to consider how other disciplines such as science, philosophy, psychology, anthropology, sociology and others contribute to religious education.

4. overviews of the contexts of origin and development of each religion and belief. Also the relationships between religions both historically and currently.

5. overviews of what religions are and their role in holding people together as individuals, families, communities and societies.

6. the relationships and links between the 6 Key Concepts on pages 12 and 25.

7. the links between Religious Education, Citizenship, PHSEE, other national curriculum subjects and cross-curricular themes.

8. consideration of what it is to be human so pupils may understand themselves, others and the world around them, and be encouraged to develop empathic, collaborative and thinking skills.

9. consideration of the place of religion in the modern world.

Progression of Content through the Key Stages

These themes can be mapped against the 6 Key concepts to check coverage and balance.

Religious Education shall include, at least, the following themes:

At Reception (Foundation Stage 2) and Key Stage 1

- Believing: what people believe about God, humanity and the natural world
- Story: how and why some stories are sacred and important
- Celebrations: how and why celebrations are important in religion
- Leaders and teachers: figures who have an influence on others
- Belonging: where and how people belong and why belonging is important
- Myself: who I am and my uniqueness as a person in family and community

Key Stage 2 themes

- 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
- 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 derive inspiration
- Religion and the individual: what is expected of a person in following a religion/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

Key Stage 3 themes

- Beliefs and concepts: the key ideas and questions of meaning in religions and beliefs, including issues about 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

- Expressing spirituality: how and why understanding of the self and human experience is 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

Key Stage 4 themes

These will depend on which of the GCSE, AS, and A level Religious Studies courses are studied. Where non examined courses are offered, a range of philosophical, psychological, sociological, theological, scientific, medical and ethical issues shall be included.

Experiences and Curriculum Opportunities

In addition to the usual academic teaching methods, the following activities can form a progression through the Key Stages as suggested by QCA. Each of these experiences can be mapped against one or more of the 6 Key Concepts:

Religious Education shall include, where possible, the following experiences and opportunities for pupils:

Reception (Foundation Stage 2) and Key Stage 1

- Visiting different religions' places of worship, with a focus on symbols and feelings
- Listening and responding to visitors from local and wider 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

Key Stage 2 experiences

- Encountering religion through visitors and visits to different religions' 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

Key Stage 3 experiences

- Encountering people from different religions, cultural and philosophical groups who can express a range of convictions on religious and moral issues
- Visiting places of worship and/or significance
- Using ICT to enhance 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 and others' beliefs and values, using reasoned, balanced arguments
- Using a range of forms of expression to communicate their ideas and responses
- Exploring the connections between RE and other subject areas

Key Stage 4 experiences

- Accessing the sources, images and sounds that are key to their study, using texts and ICT as appropriate

- Discussing, exploring and questioning concepts, images and practices

- Visiting places of worship, inter-faith centres and other centres, observing worship and rituals as appropriate

- Discussing, reflecting on and developing arguments about philosophical and ethical issues

- Engaging in community projects, dialogue or social action, reflecting on its importance for themselves and others

- Encountering, where possible, people from different religious, cultural and philosophical groups who express a range of convictions on religious and moral issues

- Evaluating concepts, practices and issues, paying attention to beliefs and experience, and using reasoned, balanced arguments

- Using a range of forms of expression to communicate their ideas and responses including exploring and recording how their thoughts, feelings and experiences have changed.

Planning and Assessment of Religious Education

In constructing Schemes of Work Religious Education shall:

1. form 5% of schools' curriculum time in all Key Stages, usually as discrete lessons or blocked around particular topics, themes or seasons, or embedded in other ways.

2. be organised as Units of Work for two or more weeks, half terms, 10 weeks, or longer.

3. include Christianity for at least 51% of Religious Education curriculum time each year.

4. include each major world religion at least once in each Key Stage except KS1, 4 and 5.

5. make time for less populous religions, other beliefs, links to Citizenship, PHSEE, other subjects and inter-subject collaborations.

6. take account of faiths represented locally.

7. be planned and assessed using the level descriptors in pages 26 to 34.

8. select topics, plan learning objectives and devise the assessment tasks at the same time, taking account of all the principles and requirements and this Syllabus.

9. select topics for meaning, made explicit in the learning objectives of knowledge, understanding and reflection (relating the topic to pupils' own lives and experience).

10. ensure coherence by linking across the level descriptors for each Key Concept when planning learning objectives, laddering success criteria, and setting assessment tasks.

11. use the level statements in pages 25 to 34 to plan for progression, and to assess learning purposefully to monitor pupil progress and the effectiveness of teaching.

12. set assessment tasks to measure understanding, because achievement in skills, knowledge and reflection will be shown in demonstrating understanding.

13. draw up a laddered list of success criteria with which to assess levels of achievement of the learning objectives.

14. design formal assessment tasks in a range of media to measure a range of levels of achievement that offer pupils of all abilities opportunities for success.

15. use assessment for learning to personalise learning for each pupil.

16. assess learning in lessons through formal or informal activities. Achievements and next steps will be shared through marking, and through discussions at class and individual levels.

Key Processes, Key Concepts, and Levels of Achievement Descriptors

Learning about religions Pupils shall be given opportunities to learn about each religion and belief from the perspective of each of these Key Concepts, encouraged to see the connections and links between them, and to gain an overview of what religions and beliefs are and how they work to hold people together.

Learning from religions Pupils shall be given opportunities to develop self awareness of how each of the Key Concepts, and the links between them, relate to and are manifest in their own lives, and to gain an understanding of human nature.

Planning and assessment The level descriptors are separated into each Key Concept in this format simply to make planning and assessment more straightforward. However teachers should read across each level to see the Key Concepts as an interlinked whole when planning Units of Work and lessons, and when devising assessment tasks.

	A Beliefs, teachings and sources	B Practices and way of life	C Forms of expression	D Identity and belonging	E Meaning, purpose and truth	F Values and commitments
LEVEL 1	• Recall religious stories	• Use some religious words and phrases to recognise and name features of religious life and practice	• recognise symbols, and other verbal and visual forms of religious practice	• Talk about their own experiences and feelings	• Talk about what they find interesting or puzzling	• Talk about what is of value and concern to themselves and others.
LEVEL 2	• Retell religious stories • Show awareness of similarities in religions	• Use religious words and phrases to identify some features of religion and its importance for some people.	• Suggest meanings for religious actions and symbols • Identify how religion is expressed in different ways	• Ask and respond sensitively to questions about their own and others' experiences and feelings	• Recognise that some questions cause people to wonder, and are difficult to answer	• Recognise their own values and others' in relation to matters of right and wrong.

	A Beliefs, teachings and sources	B Practices and way of life	C Forms of expression	D Identity and belonging	E Meaning, purpose and truth	F Values and commitments
LEVEL 3	• Make links between beliefs and sources, including religious stories and sacred texts.	• Use developing religious vocabulary to describe some key features of religions • Recognise similarities and differences • Begin to identify the impact religion has on people's lives.	• Describe some forms of religious expression.	• Identify what influences believers, and what influences themselves • Make links between aspects of their own and others' experience.	• Ask important questions about religion and beliefs. • Make links between their own and others' responses.	• Make links between values and commitments • Make links between their own attitudes and behaviour.
LEVEL 4	• Use developing religious vocabulary to describe and show understanding of sources, beliefs, ideas, feelings and experiences. • Make links between them and practices • Describe similarities and differences both within and between religions. • Describe the impact of religion on people's lives	• Use developing religious vocabulary to describe and show understanding of practices. • Make links between practices and sources, beliefs, ideas, feelings and experiences • Describe similarities and differences both within and between religions. • Describe impact on people's lives	• Suggest meanings for a range of forms of religious expression.	• Raise questions and suggest answers to questions of identity and belonging. • Apply their ideas to their own and other people's lives. • Describe what inspires and influences themselves and others.	• Raise and suggest answers to questions of meaning, purpose and truth. • Apply their ideas to their own and other people's lives. • Describe what inspires and influences themselves and others.	• Raise and suggest answers to questions about values and commitments. • Apply their ideas to their own and other people's lives. • Describe what inspires and influences themselves and others.

A Beliefs, teachings and sources	B Practices and way of life	C Forms of expression	D Identity and belonging	E Meaning, purpose and truth	F Values and commitments
• Use increasingly wide religious vocabulary to explain the impact of beliefs on individuals and communities. • Describe why people belong to religions. • Understand that similarities and differences show distinctive beliefs within and between religions, and suggest possible reasons	• Use an increasingly wide religious vocabulary to explain the impact of practices on individuals and communities. • Understand that similarities and differences show distinctive practices within and between religions and suggest possible reasons for this.	• Explain how religious sources are used to answer ultimate questions and ethical issues, recognising diversity in forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression within and between religions.	• Ask and suggest answers to questions of identity and belonging, relating them to their own and others' lives. • Explain what inspires and influences them • Express their own and others' views on the challenges of belonging to a religion.	• Ask and suggest answers to questions of meaning, purpose and truth, relating them to their own and others' lives. • Explain what inspires and influences them • Express their own and others' views on the challenges of belonging to a religion.	• Ask and suggest answers to questions of values and commitments, relating them to their own and others' lives. • Explain what inspires and influences them • Express their own and others' views on the challenges of belonging to a religion.

LEVEL 5

	A Beliefs, teachings and sources	B Practices and way of life	C Forms of expression	D Identity and belonging	E Meaning, purpose and truth	F Values and commitment
LEVEL 6	• Use religious and philosophical vocabulary to give informed accounts of religions and beliefs, explaining the reasons for diversity within and between them. • Explain why the impact of religions varies.	• Use religious and philosophical vocabulary to give informed accounts of practices, explaining the reasons for diversity within and between them. • Explain the variation in impact on individuals, communities and societies.	• Interpret sources and arguments, explaining the reasons used in different ways by different traditions to provide answers to ultimate questions and ethical issues. • Interpret the significance of different forms of religious, spiritual, moral expression.	• Express insights into their own and others' views on questions of identity and belonging.	• Express insights into their own and other's views on questions of meanings, purpose and truth. • Use reasoning and examples to express insights into the relationship between beliefs, teachings and world issues.	• Consider the challenges of belonging to a religion in the contemporary world, focusing on values and commitments values and commitments.

A Beliefs, teachings and sources	B Practices and way of life	C Forms of expression	D Identity and belonging	E Meaning, purpose and truth	F Values and commitment
• Use a wide religious and philosophical vocabulary to show a coherent understanding of a range of religions and beliefs. • Analyse issues, values and questions of meaning and truth. • Use some of the principal methods whereby religion, spirituality and ethics are studied, including the use of a variety of sources, evidence and expressive forms.	• Use a wide religious and philosophical vocabulary to show a coherent understanding of a range of religions' practices. • Account for the influence of history and culture on religious life and practice. • Explain why the consequences of belonging are not the same for all people within the same religion or tradition.	• Use some of the principal methods whereby religion, spirituality and ethics are studied, including the use of a variety of sources, evidence and forms of expression.	• Evaluate the significance of religious and other views for understanding questions of human relationships, belonging and identity using appropriate evidence and examples	• Articulate personal and critical responses to questions of meaning, purpose and truth.	• Articulate personal and critical responses to ethical issues. • Evaluate the significance of religious and other views for understanding questions of society, values and commitments, using appropriate evidence and examples.

LEVEL 7

A Beliefs, teachings and sources	B Practices and way of life	C Forms of expression	D Identity and belonging	E Meaning, purpose and truth	F Values and commitment
LEVEL 8 • Use a comprehensive religious and philosophical vocabulary to analyse a range of religions and beliefs. • Contextualise interpretations with reference to historical, cultural, social and philosophical ideas.	• Critically evaluate the impact of religions and beliefs on differing communities and societies	• Analyse differing interpretations of religious, spiritual and moral sources, using some of the principal methods by which religion, spirituality and ethics are studied. • Interpret and evaluate varied forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression.	• Coherently analyse a wide range of viewpoints on identity and belonging. • Synthesise a range of evidence, arguments, reflections and examples, fully justifying their own views and ideas, and giving a detailed evaluation of the perspectives of others.	• Coherently analyse a wide range of viewpoints on meaning, purpose and truth. • Synthesise a range of evidence, arguments, reflections and examples, fully justifying their own views and ideas, and giving a detailed evaluation of the perspectives of others.	• Coherently analyse a wide range of viewpoints on values and commitments. • Synthesise a range of evidence, arguments, reflections and examples, fully justifying their own views and ideas, and giving a detailed evaluation of the perspectives of others.

	A Beliefs, teachings and sources	B Practices and way of life	C Forms of expression	D Identity and belonging	E Meaning, purpose and truth	F Values and commitment
LEVEL 8+	• Use a complex religious, moral and philosophical vocabulary to provide a consistent and detailed analysis of religions and beliefs	• Evaluate in depth the importance of religious diversity in a pluralistic society. • Recognise the extent to which the impact of religion and beliefs on different communities and societies has changed over time.	• Provide a detailed analysis of how religious, spiritual and moral sources are interpreted in different ways, evaluating the principal methods by which religion and spirituality are studied. • Synthesise effectively pupils' own accounts of the various forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression.	• Analyse in depth a wide range of perspectives on questions of identity and belonging. • Give independent, well-informed and highly reasoned insights into their own and others' perspectives on religious and spiritual issues, providing well-substantiated and balanced conclusions.	• Analyse in depth a wide range of perspectives on questions of identity and belonging. • Give independent, well-informed and highly reasoned insights into their own and others' perspectives on religious and spiritual issues, providing well-substantiated and balanced conclusions.	• Analyse in depth a wide range of perspectives on questions of identity and belonging. • Give independent, well-informed and highly reasoned insights into their own and others' perspectives on religious and spiritual issues, providing well-substantiated and balanced conclusions

Performance Descriptions

These Performance Descriptions outline early learning and attainment below National Curriculum level 1 in eight levels, from P1 to P8. They can be used by teachers in the same way as the National Curriculum level descriptions:

Performance Descriptions across subjects

The Performance Descriptions for P1 to P3 are common across all subjects. They outline the types and range of general performance that some pupils with learning difficulties might characteristically demonstrate. Subject-focused examples are included to illustrate some of the ways in which staff might identify attainment in different subject contexts.

P1 (i)	Pupils encounter activities and experiences. They may be passive or resistant. They may show simple reflex responses, *for example, startling at sudden noises or movements. Any participation is fully prompted.*
P1 (ii)	Pupils show emerging awareness of activities and experiences. They may have periods when they appear alert and ready to focus their attention on certain people, events, objects or parts of objects, *for example, becoming still in response to silence.* They may give intermittent reactions, *for example, vocalising occasionally during group celebrations and acts of worship.*
P2 (i)	Pupils begin to respond consistently to familiar people, events and objects. They react to new activities and experiences, *for example, briefly looking around in unfamiliar natural and man-made environments.* They begin to show interest in people, events and objects, *for example, leaning towards the source of a light, sound or scent.* They accept and engage in co-active exploration, *for example, touching a range of religious artefacts and found objects in partnership with a member of staff.*
P2 (ii)	Pupils begin to be proactive in their interactions. They communicate consistent preferences and affective responses, *for example, showing that they have enjoyed an experience or interaction.* They recognise familiar people, events and objects, *for example, becoming quiet and attentive during a certain piece of music.* They perform actions, often by trial and improvement, and they remember learned responses over short periods of time, *for example, repeating a simple action with an artifact.* They co-operate with shared exploration and supported participation, *for example, performing gestures during ritual exchanges with another person performing gestures.*

P3 (i)

Pupils begin to communicate intentionally. They seek attention through eye contact, gesture or action. They request events or activities, *for example, prompting a visitor to prolong an interaction*. They participate in shared activities with less support. They sustain concentration for short periods. They explore materials in increasingly complex ways, *for example, stroking or shaking artifacts or found objects*. They observe the results of their own actions with interest, *for example, when vocalising in a quiet place*. They remember learned responses over more extended periods, *for example, following a familiar ritual and responding appropriately*.

P3 (ii)

Pupils use emerging conventional communication. They greet known people and may initiate interactions and activities, *for example, prompting an adult to sing or play a favourite song*. They can remember learned responses over increasing periods of time and may anticipate known events, *for example, celebrating the achievements of their peers in assembly*. They may respond to options and choices with actions or gestures, *for example, choosing to participate in activities*. They actively explore objects and events for more extended periods, *for example, contemplating the flickering of a candle flame*. They apply potential solutions systematically to problems, *for example, passing an artifact to a peer in order to prompt participation in a group activity*.

From level P4 to P8, many believe it is possible to describe pupils' performance in a way that indicates the emergence of skills, knowledge and understanding in RE. The descriptions provide an example of how this can be done.

P4	Pupils use single elements of communication, *for example, words, gestures, signs or symbols, to express their feelings*. They show they understand 'yes' and 'no'. They begin to respond to the feelings of others, *for example, matching their emotions and laughing when another pupil is laughing*. They join in with activities by initiating ritual actions or sounds. They may demonstrate an appreciation of stillness and quietness.
P5	Pupils respond appropriately to simple questions about familiar religious events or experiences, and communicate simple meanings. They respond to a variety of new religious experiences, *for example, involving music, drama, colour, lights, food, or tactile objects*. They take part in activities involving two or three other learners. They may also engage in moments of individual reflection.
P6	Pupils express and communicate their feelings in different ways. They respond to others in group situations and co-operate when working in small groups. Pupils listen to, and begin to respond to, familiar religious stories, poems and music, and make their own contribution to celebrations and festivals. They carry out ritualised actions in familiar circumstances. They show concern and sympathy for others in distress, *for example, through gestures, facial expressions or by offering comfort*. They start to be aware of their own influence on events and other people.
P7	Pupils listen to and follow religious stories. They communicate their ideas about religion, life events and experiences in simple phrases. They evaluate their own work and behaviour in simple ways, beginning to identify some actions as right or wrong on the basis of the consequences. They find out about aspects of religion through stories, music or drama, answer questions and communicate their responses. They may communicate their feelings about what is special to them, *for example, using role play*. They begin to understand that other people have needs and to respect these. They make purposeful relationships with others in group activity.
P8	Pupils listen attentively to religious stories or to people talking about religion. They begin to understand that religious and other stories carry moral and religious meaning. They are increasingly able to communicate ideas, feelings or responses to experiences, or to retell religious stories. They communicate simple facts about religion and important people in religions. They begin to realise the significance of religious artifacts, symbols and places. They reflect on what makes them happy, sad, excited or lonely. They demonstrate a basic understanding of what is right and wrong in familiar situations. They are often sensitive to the needs and feelings of others, and show respect for themselves and others. They treat living things and their environment with care and concern.

APPENDICES
(These are not part of the Statutory Agreed Syllabus)

Supplementary Materials

The existing Units of Work in the 2004 version of the Sheffield Agreed Syllabus pages 12 to 86 are still valid as specimen Units of Work. Teachers are free to use them in their Schemes of Work, to create their own Units, or to use other published Units of Work and specimen lesson plans. The aim is to allow innovation and creativity where appropriate, and to provide support for teachers who wish it. Best practice can be gathered and shared through the Religious Education pages at www.sheffield.gov.uk and published as supplements to these specimen Units of Work.

A teachers' toolkit of other supplementary materials will be developed as soon as is practical and be made available on the Religious Education web-pages. These will not be part of the Agreed Syllabus so are not statutory, just offered for guidance. They may include:

For Planning

- Topic list for each religion
- List of general, religious and religion specific concepts
- List of outlines of possible Units of Work
- New Secondary Curriculum case studies
- Suggested pro-formas for 3 level documentation of the Scheme of Work

For assessment

- Levels of achievement skills summary
- Ideas for sub-levels
- 'Can do' statements
- 'What to do to move up a level' statements
- Exemplars of pupils' work with moderated levels

For Teaching and Learning

- A list of resources, contacts and websites

Acknowledgements

Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education

Acknowledgement is given to the members of the Sheffield Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education who gave time and energy in setting up and acting as the Agreed Syllabus Conference to produce this Revised Locally Agreed Syllabus.

Members are grouped according to the category of representation outlined in Section 11(4) of the 1988 Education Reform Act, consolidated in 1996 and 1998 Education Acts.

Committee A (11) Such Christian and other denominations as, in the opinion of the Authority, will appropriately reflect the principal traditions in the area:

Prof Gordon Grant	Bahai faith
Vacancy	Baptist
Vacancy	Black led Christians
Suryamati	Buddhist
Mr Jim Fawcett	Catholic
Mr Ray Soulsby	Congregationalist
Dr V Patel	Hindu Faith
Mr Tanwir Rauf	Islam
Mr Abdool Gooljar	Islam
Mrs Barbara Bergman	Jewish Faith
Dr Mary Jefferson	Methodist
Mr Surinder Singh Dhillon	Sikh Faith
Mr Rupert Norris	United Reformed Church

Committee B (4) The Church of England:

Mrs Margaret Langrish
Mr Jim Bentley
Rev Peter Whittingham
Rev Simian M Griffiths

Committee C (6) Such associations representing teachers, as in the opinion of the authority, ought having regard to the circumstances of the area, to be represented:

Vacancy	ASCL
Mrs Alison Dallman	ATL Secondary (Stocksbridge High)
Vacancy	NAHT
Ms Rosie Garnett	NASUWT (Monteney Primary)
Ms Susan Smart	NUT (Greenhill Primary)
Vacancy	VOICE the Union

Committee D (4) The Local Education Authority

Cllr Mr M Lawton	Elected Member SCC
Cllr Mr M Reynolds	Elected Member SCC
Dr L Green	School Governor
Mr Roger Linstead	School Governor

Co-opted Members (6)

Teachers (4)

Ms Gayl Stillings	RE Co-ordinator	Primary (Arbourthorne)
Mrs Judith Pyatt	RE Co-ordinator	Primary (Lydgate Infants)
Ms M Parmar	Head of RE	Secondary (Abbeydale Grange)
Joanne Fellows	Head of RE	Secondary (Tapton)

Other (2)

Mr R Lamb	Sheffield Christian Constituency Movement
Vacancy	British Humanist Association

Others

Dr Sonia Sharp	Executive Director, CYPD
Mr Chris Richards	Interim Deputy Director, Learning & Achievement Service
Mrs Julie James	Clerk to SACRE
Mr Roger Daniels	Lead Professional for Religious Education

Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education

This document can be supplied in alternative formats, please contact: