A G E N D A

AGREED SYLLABUS CONFERENCE

Notice is hereby given that a meeting of the Conference to Review and Recommend the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education will be held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 25th November, 2026 at 10.00 am

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)

1. Membership

2. Kent Locally Agreed Religious Education Syllabus Extension (Pages 1 - 36)

EXEMPT ITEMS

(At the time of preparing the agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise, the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public)

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Tuesday, 17 November 2026

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From: Penny Smith-Orr – Religious Education Consultant
Joel Cook – Head of Democratic Services

To: **Agreed Syllabus Conference –** 25 November 2026

Subject: **Kent Locally Agreed Religious Education Syllabus Extension**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of report: N/A

Future Pathway of report: Officer decision pending the recommendation of the Agreed Syllabus Conference.

Electoral Division: All

Summary: This report summarises the work to be undertaken by the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) and asks the ASC to recommend that schools should continue to use the current Kent Agreed Syllabus, RE Today Model A+, until a national syllabus is adopted as a result of the inclusion of Religious Education (RE) into the National Curriculum. This is expected to take place in 2028.

Recommendation:
The Agreed Syllabus Conference is asked to recommend to the Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, that the use of the existing Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education be extended until the introduction of a national syllabus, expected in 2028.

1. Introduction

1.1 Every maintained school in England must provide a basic curriculum covering RE, sex education and the National Curriculum. This includes provision for RE for all registered pupils at the school, except for those withdrawn by their parents (or withdrawing themselves if they are aged 18 or over) in accordance with Schedule 19 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The key document in determining the teaching of RE is the locally Agreed Syllabus within the Local Authority concerned.

2. Background

2.1 The Local Authority is required to reconsider its Locally Agreed Syllabus for RE at least every five years. The current Kent RE syllabus was introduced in September 2017. The license was renewed for a further five years in 2022 and is now due to expire on 31 August 2027.

2.2 Section 375 and Schedule 31 of the Education Act 1996 requires the establishment of an ASC to oversee the syllabus review.

2.3 The 2026 Kent ASC comprise of the members of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) which includes representatives of local faith groups, teacher representatives and elected Members, organised as follows:

i. Group A – Christian Denominations (other than Church of England) and other religions which reflect the principal religions in the area
ii. Group B – Church of England
iii. Group C – Teacher representatives (from a range of teacher associations)
iv. Group D – Local Authority (LA councillors)

3. SACRE Input

3.1 The SACRE has been monitoring the development of the Government's Curriculum and Assessment Review. In recognition that a national RE syllabus is expected to take effect in 2028, members have indicated a preference to extend the existing licence rather than create or purchase a new syllabus. This approach would minimise disruption for schools and offer best value for money to the Council as it avoids the need to provide a new syllabus that would become obsolete in a short period of time.

3.2 SACRE members also highlighted that it was probable that a national RE syllabus would require some form of local syllabus supplementation to make it relevant for use in local schools. This situation will become clearer once the national syllabus becomes available for review.

3.3 In the event that further locally focused activity is required, SACRE will consider the relevant information and explore appropriate commissioning arrangements to secure the required provision, including the involvement of the Agreed Syllabus Conference where appropriate.

4. Proposal

4.1 The proposal is to extend the use of the RE Today Model A+ syllabus, with the additional syllabus units added in 2022, past the current expiry date of 31 August 2027, until a national RE syllabus can be adopted. This is planned to take effect in 2028. On that basis, the extension is planned for 1 year through to 31 August 2028.

4.2 During the lifetime of the current syllabus, it has delivered against the requirements set when commissioned. No significant concerns or issues have been identified and therefore the ACS can have confidence that an extension would support continued delivery of an effective programme of religious education across Kent's Education landscape.

4.3 This approach will require monitoring as there is a risk that there could be a delay in the release of a national syllabus; however, it will provide schools with a degree of consistency during this period of transition. Should the national syllabus timetable change, the arrangements will be reviewed and longer term commissioning approaches will be explored.

4.4 If the recommendation is agreed by the ASC, the decision to extend the use of the syllabus will be made by the Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills. The record of decision will be appended to the Cabinet Member decision

made in 2022 to evidence ongoing implementation of the policy choice to maintain current arrangements.

4.5 Subject to agreement by the ASC to recommend an extension and the subsequent determination by the Corporate Director, the use of the syllabus will be formally extended with effect from 1 September 2027.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 The cost of extending the use of the RE Today Model A+ syllabus will be met from within existing budgets.

5.2 The cost of licensing a new syllabus is approximately £25,000. The cost of extending the existing RE Today Model A+ syllabus licence for one year is approximately £4,500.

6. Legal implications

6.1 The review and extension of the locally agreed syllabus fulfils the duty under Section 375 and Schedule 31 of the Education Act 1996 to review syllabi periodically.

7. Equalities implications

7.1 No adverse implications are expected to arise from the continued use of the RE Today Model A+ syllabus.

8. Recommendation:

The Agreed Syllabus Conference is asked to recommend to the Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, that the use of the existing Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education be extended until the introduction of a national syllabus, expected in 2028.

9. Appendices

Appendix 1: RE Today Syllabus Model A+

Appendix 2: Additional Syllabus units for 2022

Appendix 3: Decision - 22/00048 - Kent Locally Agreed Religious Education Syllabus 2022-2027 - Kent County Council - Council & Democracy

10. Background Documents

Non-Statutory Guidance for the Kent Agreed Syllabus (Bottom of page):
Standing advisory council for religious education (SACRE) - KELSI

RE Today Agreed Syllabus brochure:
https://www.retoday.org.uk/consultancy/sacre-la/agreed-syllabus-brochure/

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Kent

Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education

2022–2027



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Published by RE Today Services, Imperial Court, Sovereign Road, Birmingham, B30 3FH

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Foreword

I am very grateful for the ongoing work of the Kent Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) which plays such an important role in ensuring pupils receive their statutory entitlement to good quality Religious Education and collective worship. The Kent SACRE Agreed Syllabus Conference has now completed its syllabus review and this new digital document includes a refreshed introduction, as well as some new units of work in Key Stages 1, 2 and 3.

Whether one has a religious faith or not, it is clear that religion and belief have shaped history and continue to play a central role in local and global affairs, influencing the lives of our children, young people, families and communities. High quality RE makes a unique and distinctive contribution to developing the knowledge and understanding of how values and beliefs inspire people to action, individually and collectively, helping pupils to make sense of the world.

Not only does RE provide opportunities for individual spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by exploring fundamental questions about human life, but it also prepares pupils to become active members of their community through participating in civilised debate and reasoned argument on often controversial issues.

This agreed syllabus sets out programmes that provide a coherent understanding of religions and worldviews, preparing children and young people for life in twenty-first century Britain. It includes guidance on how to approach the teaching of RE across all key stages, taking a rigorous approach that promotes high standards of RE in our schools. Whether you are new to RE or an experienced teacher, the Agreed Syllabus is an invaluable resource.

Kent SACRE and KCC want to encourage all schools to value and develop their RE provision. The WIRE (Widening Inclusivity in Religious Education) is a SACRE-led award that supports schools to take a pro-active approach to RE, to widen their doors, and become more inclusive.
The award:

- works on an annual basis
- requires schools to complete four simple elements
- is free to schools
- supports British Values.

Using the new Agreed Syllabus will support schools to meet The WIRE criteria and achieve the award.

I am therefore delighted to commend the new Agreed Syllabus 2022—2027 to you.

Christine McInnes

Christine McInnes
Director of Education, Children, Young People and Education, Kent County Council

Kent Agreed Syllabus for RE, 2022-2027 © RE Today Services 2022

Introduction

The historical and cultural roots of the United Kingdom lie with Christianity. Since the arrival of St. Augustine to the present day, Kent remains central to the growth of Christianity. The first two cathedrals in England were founded in Canterbury and Rochester. Today this continues to be reflected by Canterbury Cathedral being the centre of the worldwide Anglican Church.

Kent has always been an important geographical gateway for the United Kingdom. It is a County of villages and towns, open country and major conurbations. This has created a richness and diversity of faith that results in a vibrant and dynamic community. Kent's unique position also presents exciting opportunities for its citizens to explore faith and culture in the wider world community.

The census details for Kent on page 5 show the levels of diversity across the county in 2011. Through this, particular pockets of different faith communities can be seen, and teachers should take into account the makeup of their class and school location and ensure that every pupil of faith, and no faith, feels that their particular practices are esteemed. The 2021 census results have not yet been published but will be put on the Kelsi website when they are available.

This new statutory syllabus has been produced by RE Today and Kent SACRE. It is a revised version of the 2017-2022 syllabus. Details of the amendments can be found below. In adopting the syllabus, Kent SACRE hopes teachers in Kent will continue to be enabled to offer pupils the key values that have been treasured by all religious traditions. Regardless of religious belief or conviction, these values are shared by many and have shaped Kent's past, are contributing to its present and will continue to mould its future.

This revised syllabus for Kent schools has been endorsed by both the Diocese of Canterbury and Diocese of Rochester. The voluntary aided church schools in Rochester Diocese will continue to mainly use the Diocesan syllabus while all church schools in Canterbury Diocese and the voluntary controlled schools in Rochester Diocese will continue to use this, the Agreed Syllabus for Kent SACRE, as their main document.

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

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

The principal aim of RE in the Kent Syllabus is:

> To engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldviews address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own.

This aim will be found on each page of the syllabus where a planning guide is given, and Kent SACRE intends that teachers should, through this aim, emphasise the place of dialogue and of evaluation.

As teachers use the aim, they should seek to enable pupils to:

- engage in meaningful, informed and academic dialogue with those of other faiths and none, and
- develop evaluative responses of their own to the questions and issues addressed in RE.

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What are the changes in this revised syllabus and what has stayed the same?

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

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

Change: the syllabus is updated in the following ways:

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

The syllabus is for implementation from Autumn 2022.

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

Further web-based support materials
RE Today Services maintains a weblink for additional resources which support the syllabus. These are updated as necessary. These non-statutory support materials on, for example, SEND, EYFS, sequencing and progression are of high usefulness, and we recommend RE Leads make use of them in implementing the syllabus
www.retoday.org.uk/syllabus-resources

Contact RE Today to purchase the planned units of work that accompany the syllabus:
sales@retoday.org.uk

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Websites for RE

The following are only a selection of websites that could be of use or interest to teachers of religious education.

Penny Smith-Orr RE Consultant to Kent SACRE website with resources www.reconsultant.co.uk.
Email: pennysmithorr@gmail.com

Kent teachers Website	www.kelsi.org.uk/ (look for Kent SACRE pages)
The Stapleford Centre The BBC RE Site BBC My Life, My religion (KS2) RE Online NATRE RE Today Free resources YouTube True Tube RE Quality Mark Applying for The WIRE	www.stapleford-centre.org/ www.bbc.co.uk/religion www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b05pc1c9 www.reonline.org.uk www.natre.org.uk/resources www.retoday.org.uk www.teaching.ideas.co.uk/subjects/re www.youtube.com www.truetube.com http://reqm.org pennysmithorr@gmail.com
Buddha Dharma The Buddha Net Gateway to Buddhist websites	www.buddhanet.net/ http://dharmanet.org/
Christianity RE-Quest Culham St Gabriel's The Stapleford Centre KS1 and 2 Lesson resources	 www.request.org.uk www.cstg.org.uk www.stapleford-centre.org/ www.faithinschools.co.uk
Hindu Dharma Hindu resources online ISKCON	 www.hinducounciluk.org.uk www.iskconuk.org.uk
Islam Information, The Hajj and Translation of the Qur'an	 www.History.com/topics/religion/islam www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides
Judaism The Board of Deputies of British Jews The Holocaust	 www.torah.org/ www.bod.org.uk/resources www.HMD.org.uk www.bethshalom.com
Sikhi The Sikh Net The Sikh Home Page	 www.sikhnet.com/ www.sikhs.org/

Suggested Long Term overview for C of E Primary Schools in Kent

Kent Agreed Syllabus incorporating Understanding Christianity

September 2022

	AUTUMN		SPRING		SUMMER	
EYFS	**CREATION** Why is the word 'God' so important to Christians?	**OLD TESTAMENT STORIES** Which stories are special and why? **INCARNATION** Why do Christians perform Nativity plays at Christmas?	**NEW TESTAMENT STORIES** Which stories are special and why?	**SALVATION** Why do Christians put a cross in an Easter garden?	**WORLD FAITH STORIES** Which stories are special and why?	**WORLD FAITH STORIES** Which stories are special and why?
Year 1	**GOD** What do Christians believe that God is like?	**INCARNATION** Why does Christmas matter to Christians? *CORE LEARNING*	**GOSPEL** What is the good news that Jesus brings? *CORE LEARNING*	**SALVATION** Why does Easter matter to Christians? *CORE LEARNING*	**JUDAISM** Who is Jewish and what do they believe?	**JUDAISM** Who is Jewish and what do they believe?
Year 2	**CREATION** Who made the world?	**INCARNATION** Why does Christmas matter to Christians? *DIGGING DEEPER*	**GOSPEL** What is the good news that Jesus brings? *DIGGING DEEPER*	**SALVATION** Why does Easter matter to Christians? *DIGGING DEEPER*	**ISLAM** Who is a Muslim and what do they believe?	**ISLAM** Who is a Muslim and what do they believe?
Year 3	**PEOPLE OF GOD** What is it like to follow God?	**SIKHI** What is important for Sikh people?	**INCARNATION** What is the Trinity? *CORE LEARNING*	**SALVATION** Why do Christians call the day Jesus died 'Good Friday'? *CORE LEARNING*	**KINGDOM OF GOD** When Jesus left, what was the impact of Pentecost?	**SIKHI** How do Sikh people worship and celebrate?
Year 4	**CREATION** What do Christians learn from the Creation story?	**INCARNATION** What is the Trinity? *DIGGING DEEPER*	**GOSPEL** What kind of a world did Jesus want?	**SALVATION** Why do Christians call the day Jesus died 'Good Friday'? *DIGGING DEEPER*	**HINDU DHARMA** What does it mean to be a Hindu in Britain today?	**UNIVERSAL** Why do some people think that life is a journey and what significant experiences mark this?
Year 5	**GOD** What does it mean if God is loving and holy?	**INCARNATION** Was Jesus the Messiah? *CORE LEARNING*	**PEOPLE OF GOD** How can following God bring freedom and justice?	**SALVATION** What did Jesus do to save human beings?	**JUDAISM** What does it mean to be Jewish in Britain today?	**ISLAM** What does it mean to be a Muslim in Britain today? (Part 1)
Year 6	**CREATION** Creation and science: conflicting or complementary?	**GOSPEL** What would Jesus do?	**ISLAM** What does it mean to be a Muslim in Britain today? (Part 2)	**SALVATION** What difference does the resurrection make for Christians?	**UNIVERSAL** Is it better to express your beliefs in arts and architecture or in charity and generosity?	**KINGDOM OF GOD** What kind of king is Jesus?

Population statistics for Kent, London and the South East Region

	Population	Christian	Buddhist	Hindu	Jewish	Muslim	Sikh	Other religion	No religion	Religion not stated
Kent	1,463,740	915,200	6,802	10,943	1,777	13,932	10,545	6,145	391,591	106,805
Ashford	117,956	74,253	803	1,282	116	1,019	95	432	30,984	8,972
Canterbury	151,145	91,122	880	1,055	267	1,838	245	760	43,117	11,861
Dartford	97,365	59,045	382	1,547	86	1,566	1,543	319	26,486	6,391
Dover	111,674	71,541	523	682	97	521	50	525	29,047	8,688
Gravesham	101,720	61,891	333	942	54	1,894	7,743	606	21,862	6,395
Maidstone	155,143	97,578	901	1,492	163	1,685	176	612	41,493	11,043
Sevenoaks	114,893	75,169	367	385	196	600	180	348	28,939	8,709
Shepway	107,969	67,296	962	1,551	78	796	34	506	28,575	8,171
Swale	135,835	85,535	275	368	93	792	158	499	39,087	9,028
Thanet	134,186	82,447	491	639	273	1,230	94	690	38,383	9,939
Tonbridge + Malling	120,805	76,920	441	539	122	750	169	412	32,996	8,456
Tunbridge Wells	115,049	72,403	444	461	232	1,241	58	436	30,622	9,152
LONDON	8,173,941	3,957,984	82,026	411,291	148,602	1,012,823	126,134	47,970	1,694,372	692,739
The South East (excl. London)	8,634,750	5,160,128	43,946	92,499	17,761	201,651	54,941	39,672	2,388,286	635,866

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

Note that the findings of the British Social Attitudes Survey 2018 (National Centre for Social Research), a national survey of around 3,000 adults, indicates a greater percentage of people (52%) identifying as having no religion. More information available here: www.bsa.natcen.ac.uk/media/39293/1_bsa36_religion.pdf

Among young people, aged 16-29, the percentage rises to 70% saying they have no religion: see the report into *Europe's Young Adults and Religion* by Stephen Bullivant www.stmarys.ac.uk/research/centres/benedict-xvi/docs/2018-mar-europe-young-people-report-eng.pdf

A1 The purpose of RE

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

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

Principal aim

The principal aim of RE is to engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldviews address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own.

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

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

Ofsted 2019

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

A2 The aim(s) of RE

The threefold aim of RE elaborates the principal aim.

The curriculum for RE aims to ensure that all pupils:

1. **Know about and understand a range of religious and non-religious worldviews[1], so that they can:**
   - describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities and amongst individuals
   - identify, investigate and respond to questions posed, and responses offered, by some of the sources of wisdom[2] found in religious and non-religious worldviews
   - appreciate and appraise the nature, significance and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.

2. **Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religious and non-religious worldviews, so that they can:**
   - explain, using reasoned arguments, their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities
   - express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value, including ethical issues
   - appreciate and appraise varied dimensions of religion.[3]

3. **Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religious and non-religious worldviews, so that they can:**
   - investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding creatively
   - enquire into what enables different individuals and communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all
   - articulate clearly beliefs, values and commitments in order to explain why they may be important in their own and other people's lives.

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

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

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

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

A3 How to use this agreed syllabus: 12 steps

1. Key to implementing this revised syllabus is to take time to **understand the purpose and principal aim**, p. 8. Is this the understanding of what RE is in your school? Does RE in your school currently deliver this aim? If teachers are to teach RE effectively, it is vital that they understand what they are doing RE *for*. Schools should reflect on how meeting the principal aim contributes to SMSC and wider school priorities.
2. For each key stage, get to know the **Programme of Study** pages (EYFS p. 24; KS1 p. 36; KS2 p. 50; KS3, p. 77). These give the statutory requirements of the syllabus. Note that the syllabus is structured around the three aims (see p.9) and the three strands, *Believing, Expressing and Living*. The three aims form the basis of the end of key stage outcomes and the progressive 'Learning outcomes' in each unit of study. The overview of questions (pp. 20-21) shows how the key questions relate to the strands.
3. Review the **legal requirements** (see p. 13) and **curriculum time** for RE (see p. 16). Are you fulfilling the legal requirements for RE for all pupils? Are you giving sufficient time to allow pupils to make good progress in their understanding and skills?
4. Review the **religions and beliefs** studied at each key stage (see p. 15 for overview). Are you following the syllabus requirements? Are you meeting the needs of your children in terms of worldviews studied?
5. The syllabus is based around a **key question approach**, where the questions open up the content to be studied. The syllabus gives some example **key questions** to help you to deliver the statutory Programmes of Study. All of the questions are found on pp. 20-21, with EYFS also on p. 26, KS1 on p. 37, KS2 p. 51, KS3 p. 79 followed by detailed outlines for each question. These are not statutory, but are designed to support you in delivering high-quality RE that enables coherence and progression in the pupils' learning. The key question outlines give structured support in terms of 'emerging', 'expected' and 'exceeding' learning outcomes, and suggested content to enable good planning and progression.
6. **Audit the topics you already cover** in your existing long-term plan. There may well be overlap with your current RE, but you will still need to go through and adjust (or, if necessary, re-write) Schemes of Work to ensure that RE **meets the principal aim**, **reflects the key question approach** and **secures progression in relation to the end of key stage outcomes**. To this end, use the planning steps.
7. The **planning process** is at the heart of the syllabus (pp. 38, 52, 80). The five steps are designed to help teachers make best use of the key questions and plan excellent RE. As a staff/department, go through the planning process, following the steps and one example of a key question. Note that there is flexibility in terms of choosing outcomes and content, but that all steps need to be followed.
8. Take the opportunity of the new syllabus to audit your schemes of work to consider the **styles of teaching and learning** that pupils are encountering. Is RE engaging and encouraging enquiry? How is RE delivered? Does it link to other subjects? Is it taught in blocks or on a once-a-week model? Do you deliberately build in opportunities for recall and retrieval of previous learning?
9. Work to create a coherent **long-term plan** to begin in November 2022. Make sure you can explain why you are doing units in your chosen order, so that pupils' understanding is built up in a coherent way. The syllabus is flexible enough to allow RE to be taught in a variety of ways – RE days or weeks, linking with other subjects and discretely. Ensure RE is true to the principal aim and the Programmes of Study.
10. If you are a Special School or have significant numbers of SEND pupils, read Sections C9 (p.97), E8 and E9 (p. 127, p. 128ff). There is freedom in the syllabus to adapt your RE to meet the needs of SEND pupils.
11. Share the positive adaptations and changes in RE with the governing body and other interested parties. This is an ideal chance to raise the profile of RE.
12. Use November 2022—July 2023 to implement the syllabus gradually. Adapt what works well and create a scheme of work that fits with your methods of curriculum delivery and delivers the principal aim of the syllabus. Use the year to train staff who teach RE, improve and review your planning and teaching.

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

RE is for all pupils:

- RE must be provided for all registered pupils in state-funded schools in England, including those in the sixth form, unless withdrawn by their parents (or withdrawing themselves if they are aged 18 or over).[4] It is a necessary part of a 'broad and balanced curriculum'.
- This requirement does not apply for children below compulsory school age (although there are many examples of good practice of RE in nursery classes).
- Special schools should ensure that every pupil receives RE 'as far as is practicable'.[5]

RE is determined locally, not nationally:

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

RE is plural:

- The RE curriculum drawn up by a SACRE, or by an academy or free school, 'shall reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'.[7]
- The agreed syllabus has a duty 'to take care that information or knowledge included in the curriculum is conveyed in a pluralistic manner' and 'must accord equal respect to different religious convictions, and to non-religious belief'.[8] Note that the term 'religion' encompasses both religious and non-religious beliefs.[9]

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

[4] School Standards and Framework Act 1998, Schedule 19; Education Act 2002, section 80.
[5] The Education (Special Educational Needs) (England) (Consolidation) (Amendment) Regulations 2006 Regulation 5A.
[6] Education Act 1996 Schedule 31.
[7] Education Act 1996 section 375.
[8] www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/r-fox-v-ssfe.pdf 'Equal respect' does not entail equal time.
[9] In accordance with Human Rights Act 1988.

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

Right of withdrawal

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

B1.1 RE, academies and free schools

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

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

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

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

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

[10] A Curriculum Framework for Religious Education in England (REC 2013).
[11] Religion and Worldviews: the way forward (REC 2018).
[12] www.gov.uk/government/publications/research-review-series-religious-education/research-review-series-religious-education
[13] www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/projects/draft-handbook-and-nse/

B2 What worldviews are to be taught?

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

Religious traditions are to be studied in depth as follows:

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

Important notes:

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

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

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

B3 Time for religious education

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

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

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

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

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

Important notes:

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

C1 Curriculum design in RE

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

Your RE curriculum needs to be structured so that it…

…makes sense to pupils

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

…focuses on core concepts

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

…allows pupils to encounter diverse examples of religion and worldviews

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

…enables pupils to embed learning in their long-term memory

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

…makes space for pupils' own beliefs/worldviews

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

…encourages pupils' personal development, applying their learning to living

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

See Section E4 (p. 121) Creating a coherent curriculum: long-term planning, and
www.retoday.org.uk/syllabus-resources/ Password: ASyllabusRET!

C2 Worldviews in RE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

C3 Religious education key questions: an overview

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

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

KS1 Units of Study

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

The **principal aim of RE** is to engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldviews address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own.

Strand / Questions / Religions	**Learning outcomes** (intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes):	**Suggested content for learning:** Teachers can select content from these examples and add more of their own.
Strand: Believing **Recommended Y1** **Questions in this thread:** 1.2 Who is a Muslim and what do they believe? 1.3 Who is Jewish and what do they believe? L2.1 What do different people believe about God? U2.1 Why do some people believe God exists? 3.1 Do we need to prove God's existence? **Worldviews:** Christians	Teachers will enable pupils to achieve some of these outcomes, as appropriate to their age and stage: **Emerging:** • **Talk about the fact that Christians believe in God and follow the example of Jesus (A1).** • **Recognise some Christian symbols and images used to express ideas about God (A3).** **Expected:** • **Talk about some simple ideas about Christian beliefs about God and Jesus (A1).** • **Re-tell a story that shows what Christians might think about God, in words, drama and pictures, suggesting what it means (A2).** • **Talk about issues of good and bad, right and wrong arising from the stories (C3).** • **Ask some questions about believing in God and offer some ideas of their own (C1).** **Exceeding:** • **Make links between what Jesus taught and what Christians believe and do (A2).** • **Respond thoughtfully to a piece of Christian music and a Bible text that inspired it (B1).**	• Share stories that help to show how Christians think of God e.g. the book of Jonah in the Old Testament, the Annunciation (Luke 1:26–56), the lost son (Luke 15:11–32) and Pentecost (Acts 2:1–13). • Describe some of the beliefs that Christian traditions (organised worldviews) teach about God e.g. all-powerful, loving, close to every person, forgiving. • Look at art and recognise some symbols and images used to express ideas about God. • Listen to pieces of music that express ideas about God. • Talk to Christians about what they believe about God (personal worldviews). • Give opportunities for pupils to reflect on and express their own big questions about life and God, in particular through discussion, art, music and drama e.g responding to the question 'Where is God?' through art. • Using a suitable children's Bible (e.g. *The Lion Storyteller Bible* or New International Children's Version), share stories that show the importance of Jesus to Christians e.g. a parable, a miracle, a teaching of Jesus, birth and death and resurrection of Jesus. • Linking with these stories, describe some of the beliefs that Christians hold about Jesus e.g. that he was kind to people in need, that he performed miracles, that he is the son of God, that he lives. • Investigate how Christians follow teaching from the Bible about how to live their lives e.g. prayer and worship, treating others kindly. Hear and think about some prayers Christians use. Note that not all Christians practise their faith in the same ways. • Experience thanking and being thanked, praising and being praised, and connect this experience simply to an idea about worship. • Many pupils have no personal belief in God but have just learnt lots about people who do. Give them the opportunity to comment on the idea of God for themselves, such as whether or not it has any meaning in their lives.

Upper Key Stage 2 Units of Study

Key question U2.2: What would Jesus do? (Can people live by the values of Jesus in the twenty-first century?)

The **principal aim of RE** is to engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldviews address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own.

Strand / Questions / Religions	**Learning outcomes** (intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes):	**Suggested content for learning:** Teachers can select content from these examples and add more of their own.
Strand: Living **Recommended Y5** **Questions in this thread:** F2 Which people are special and why? L2.3 Why is Jesus inspiring to some people? 3.3 What is so radical about Jesus? **Worldviews:** Christians	Teachers will enable pupils to achieve some of these outcomes, as appropriate to their age and stage: **Emerging:** • **Make connections between some of Jesus' teachings and the way Christians live today (A1).** • **Discuss their own ideas about the importance of values to live by, comparing them to Christian ideas (C3).** **Expected:** • **Outline Jesus' teaching on how his followers should live (A2).** • **Offer interpretations of two of Jesus' parables and say what they might teach Christians about how to live (B3).** • **Explain the impact Jesus' example and teachings might have on Christians today (B1).** • **Express their own understanding of what Jesus would do in relation to a moral dilemma from the world today (C3).** **Exceeding:** • **Explain the links between Jesus' death on the cross and Christian belief in love and forgiveness, giving reasons why Christians want to follow Jesus (A2).** • **Investigate and explain the challenges of following Jesus' teaching about love, forgiveness, justice and/or generosity, expressing their own ideas (C3).**	• Build on learning from key question L2.3, and note where some key texts have been studied before. Use the ideas below to explore Jesus' teachings and example and how they inspire many Christians today. Consider the extent to which Jesus' values and example would benefit today's world, within the school community, local and national communities and out to the global community. • Examine Jesus' mission (Luke 4:18–19). Find examples of where he fulfilled this. • **Love**: use some of Jesus' stories, teachings and examples to understand what Christians believe he meant by loving others (e.g. greatest commandments, Matthew 22:37–40; good Samaritan, Luke 10:30–35; the lost son, Luke 15:11–32; love your enemies, Matthew 5:43–48; compare with Paul's letter, 1 Corinthians 13:4–7; explore the idea of *agape* love – self-sacrificial love; make link with belief that Jesus died to show his love for all humans, John 3:16). • **Forgiveness**: use some of Jesus' stories, teachings and examples to understand why he saw forgiveness as so important (e.g. forgive others, Mark 11:25/Luke 6:37; the two debtors, Luke 7:36–50; the unforgiving servant, Matthew 18:21–35; Jesus forgives those who crucify him, Luke 23:34; link to previous learning about sin and the 'Fall' in question L2.2). • **Justice and fairness**: use some of Jesus' stories, teaching and examples to understand the way many Christians believe people should treat each other (the sheep and the goats, Matthew 25:31–46; serve others, Mark 9:35–37; not just speaking about justice but practising it, Luke 11:39–42). • **Generosity and not being greedy**: use some of Jesus' stories, teaching and examples to understand the way many Christians believe people should handle wealth (the vineyard workers, Matthew 20:1–16; widow's offering, Mark 12:41–44; the rich young man, Mark 10:17–27; Zacchaeus, Luke 19:1–9). • Read gospel passages that talk about the 'kingdom of God', where people live the way God wants people to live (e.g. mustard seed, Mark 4:30–32; hidden treasure, Matthew 13:44–46; good and bad soil, Matthew 13:1–8, 18–23; the great feast Luke 14:15–24). What would this kingdom be like? • Devise some moral dilemmas; pupils ask 'what would Jesus do?', to apply their learning in this unit. Reflect on and discuss what impact following Jesus' example and teaching have on the school/local community/world. Some say Jesus' demands are impossible: is this true, and if so, is it worth aiming for them or not?

Planning steps

Teachers should have the principal aim of RE at the forefront of their minds as they plan their RE.

The **principal aim of RE** is to engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldviews address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own.

Step 1: Key question	• Select a key question from p. 79. • Make sure that you can explain where this unit/question fits into key stage planning e.g. how it builds on previous learning in RE, what other subject areas it links to, if appropriate.
Step 2: Select learning outcomes	• Use the learning outcomes from column 2 of the key question outlines/units of study on pp. 82-93. • Select learning outcomes appropriate for the age and ability of your pupils. • Being clear about these outcomes will help you to decide what and how to teach.
Step 3: Select specific content	• Look at the suggested content for your key question, from column 3 in the key question outlines/units of study. • Select the best content (from here, or additional information from elsewhere) to help you to teach in an engaging way so that pupils achieve the learning outcomes.
Step 4: Assessment: write specific pupil outcomes	• Turn the learning outcomes into pupil-friendly 'I can' or 'You can' statements. • Make the learning outcomes specific to the content you are teaching, to help you know just what it is that you want pupils to be able to understand and do as a result of their learning. • These 'I can/you can' statements will help you to integrate assessment for learning within your teaching, so that there is no need to do a separate end-of-unit assessment.
Step 5: Develop teaching and learning activities	• Develop active learning opportunities and investigations, using some engaging stimuli, to enable pupils to achieve the outcomes. • Don't forget the skills you want pupils to develop, as well as the content you want them to understand. • Make sure that the activities allow pupils to practise these skills as well as show their understanding.

For guidance on long-term planning, see Section E4 (p. 121) *Creating a coherent curriculum: long-term planning* and www.retoday.org.uk/syllabus-resources/ Password: ASyllabusRET!

KS3 Units of Study

Key question 3.5: Why is there suffering? Are there any good solutions?

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Strand / Questions / Religions	**Learning outcomes** (intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes):	**Suggested content for learning:** Teachers can select content from these examples and add more of their own.
Strand: Believing **Recommended Y9** **Questions in this thread:** U2.3 What do religions say to us when life gets hard? **Worldviews:** Christians, Buddhists	Teachers will enable pupils to achieve some of these outcomes, as appropriate to their age and stage: **Emerging:** • **Outline two religious views of why humans suffer (A1).** • **Present at least two solutions offered by religions to suffering, with examples (B1).** **Expected:** • **Give well-informed insights into two Christian views about why people suffer, supported by evidence from biblical texts (B1).** • **Contrast two views of why we suffer from two different traditions (A1).** • **Argue the case that religions do or do not offer good solutions as to why we suffer (C1).** • **Consider and weigh up how far religious answers to the question of suffering are universally useful (A2).** **Exceeding:** • **Evaluate critically the idea that suffering is a natural human state to which there is no solution (C1).** • **Offer theological, philosophical and/or psychological reasons for arguing that religions exist to help humans cope with suffering, fear and despair (A3).**	• Explore different causes and types of suffering: emotional, physical, existential. Consider how suffering differs around the world, e.g. compare relative poverty to absolute poverty. Consider the phrase 'first world problems' – do students suffer from these? Is suffering a natural human state, wherever we live and whatever we have? • Explore Old Testament accounts of why we suffer. Look at the story of the 'Fall' in Genesis 3. Explore some Christian understandings of how sin is the root cause of human problems. Read some Proverbs, e.g. Proverbs 10 and 22. If we follow these instructions (work hard, don't be greedy, be obedient, etc.) will we avoid suffering? Compare with Job, who demands to know why the righteous suffer. Explore the story of Job. Read God's answers in e.g. Job 38:2–11. How far is Job happy with this response and why? How do Christians respond to Job's example? Can students suggest alternative answers to Job as to why good people suffer? • In the New Testament, Jesus says his followers should alleviate suffering. In Matthew 25:31–46 Jesus explains that when 'you help one of my brothers/sisters, you help me'. Is there suffering because humans do not help each other? • Explore a philosophical approach: how can a good God allow suffering? Many people argue that God cannot be good, or that God does not exist. How do Christians see the death and resurrection of Jesus as an answer to the challenge of the problem of suffering? • Explore Buddhist understanding of suffering as *dukkha* (1st Noble Truth). We cause dukkha through craving (2nd Noble Truth). Look for examples of how craving brings dukkha in the lives of individuals. How far does this reflect students' own experience? • Find out about the Buddhist solution to suffering: cessation of craving (*tanha*) through following the Noble Eightfold Path (3rd and 4th Noble Truths). How does the Noble Eightfold Path offer a map to escape the jaws of Dukkha? Consider how far humans are responsible for causing dukkha *and* overcoming it. • Link with key question 3.4 and evaluate how far Christian and Buddhist beliefs about life after death affect their views on suffering. • Ask students to summarise each religious teaching, e.g. behave well and trust God (Old Testament); get your hands dirty – follow Jesus (New Testament); stop wanting what you cannot have (Buddha Dharma). Evaluate each and express students' own responses to the question: Are there any good solutions to suffering?

C8 RE in KS4 and 5 /14–19 Statutory Requirements



Penny, age 15
'Your request has been denied.'

'Your request…' represents the feeling that God, if he exists, is unreachable and hidden.
'At a time when we need God most, such as the peril the girl is facing, we reach out. No one grabs our hand. The masses of paper falling from the sky are a suggestion that our prayers never reach anyone. Cast up to the sky they fall back down again.
'The phrase "your request has been denied", written on every piece of paper, is a suggestion that I can't reach God. I feel there is no personal bond, no personal response to my prayers. All we receive is a weak cover-up of the truth, and automated message: your request to be happy, to be alone, to do well, to get better, has been denied. If this is what happens, I feel it is very unlikely that God exists. This is what my paint and ink expresses. The different coloured lines represent movement, the different feelings the girl experiences during each prayer, each denied request.'

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C8 RE in KS4 and 5 /14–19

What do pupils get out of RE at this key stage?

All state-funded schools must teach RE to all students on school rolls, including all those in 14–19 education (unless withdrawn by their parents, or, if 18 or over, they withdraw themselves). It is important that teaching enables suitable progression from the end of Key Stage 3, in varied ways that meet the learning needs of all students. All students can reasonably expect their learning will be accredited, and **this agreed syllabus requires that all 14–16 students must pursue an accredited course** in Religious Studies or Religious Education leading to a qualification approved under Section 96 (see p. 15). The agreed syllabus does not require that every individual student be entered for this examination: that is a matter for schools. Appropriate modes of accreditation include nationally accredited courses in RE such as GCSE and A level RS, and a wide range of enrichment courses and opportunities, such as the Extended Project Qualification. Good practice examples include many schools where all students take GCSE RS courses at 16, since these qualifications are an excellent platform for 14–16 RE.

Note that teachers must ensure that RE in these phases accords equal respect to religious and non-religious worldviews. Following a GCSE course does not automatically fulfil this (see p. 16).

70 hours of tuition or 5% of curriculum time across Key Stage 4 is the normal requirement by which students can achieve the standards of the GCSE short course in Religious Studies. This is the minimum benchmark for RE provision at Key Stage 4 for schools using this syllabus. 140 hours of tuition is needed for GCSE RS Full Courses, in line with other GCSE subjects.

Schools should provide opportunities for those who wish to take A levels, alongside core RE for 16–19s. The minimum requirement is ten hours of core RE across Year 12–13.

What do students get out of RE at this age?

All students should extend and deepen their knowledge and understanding of religious and non-religious worldviews, explaining local, national and global contexts. Building on their prior learning, they appreciate and appraise the nature of different religions and worldviews in systematic ways. They should use a wide range of concepts in the field of Religious Studies confidently and flexibly to contextualise and analyse the expressions of religions and worldviews they encounter. They should be able to research and investigate the influence and impact of religions and worldviews on the values and lives of both individuals and groups, evaluating their impact on current affairs. They should be able to appreciate and appraise the beliefs and practices of different religions and worldviews with an increasing level of discernment based on interpretation, evaluation and analysis, developing and articulating well-reasoned positions. They should be able to use different disciplines of religious study to analyse the nature of religion.

Specifically, students should be taught to, for example:

- Investigate and analyse beliefs and practices of religions and worldviews (including non-religious worldviews) using a range of arguments and evidence to evaluate issues and draw balanced conclusions.
- Synthesise their own and others' ideas and arguments about sources of wisdom and authority using coherent reasoning, making appropriate references to their historical, cultural and social contexts.
- Develop coherent and well-informed analysis of diversity in the forms of expression and ways of life found in different religions and worldviews.
- Account for varied interpretations of commitment to religions and worldviews and for responses to profound questions about the expression of identity, diversity, meaning and value.
- Argue for and justify their own positions with regard to key questions about the nature of religion, providing a detailed evaluation of the perspectives of others.
- Use a range of research methods to examine and critically evaluate varied perspectives and approaches to issues of community cohesion, respect for all and mutual understanding.

D2 A progression overview for 5-14s: outcomes

Aims in RE: A progression grid	At the end of key stage 1 most pupils will be able to:	At the end of key stage 2 most pupils will be able to:	At the end of key stage 3 most pupils will be able to:
Know about and Understand A1. Describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities	Recall and name different beliefs and practices, including festivals, worship, rituals and ways of life, in order to find out about the meanings behind them;	Describe and make connections between different features of the religious and non-religious worldviews they study, discovering more about celebrations, worship, pilgrimages and the rituals which mark important points in life in order to reflect thoughtfully on their ideas;	Explain and interpret ways that the history and culture of religious and non-religious worldviews influence individuals and communities, including a wide range of beliefs and practices in order to appraise reasons why some people support and others question these influences;
Know about and Understand A2. Identify, investigate and respond to questions posed by, and responses offered by some of the sources of wisdom found in religious and non-religious worldviews	Retell and suggest meanings to some religious and moral stories, exploring and discussing sacred writings and sources of wisdom and recognising the communities from which they come;	Describe and understand links between stories and other aspects of the communities they are investigating, responding thoughtfully to a range of sources of wisdom and to beliefs and teachings that arise from them in different communities;	Explain and interpret a range of beliefs, teachings and sources of wisdom and authority in order to understand religious and non-religious worldviews as coherent systems or ways of seeing the world;
Know about and Understand A3. Appreciate and appraise the nature, significance and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning	Recognise some different symbols and actions which express a community's way of life, appreciating some similarities between communities;	Explore and describe a range of beliefs, symbols and actions so that they can understand different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning;	Explain how and why individuals and communities express the meanings of their beliefs and values in many different forms and ways of living, enquiring into the variety, differences and relationships that exist within and between them;
Express and Communicate B1. Explain reasonably their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities	Ask and respond to questions about what communities do, and why, so that they can identify what difference belonging to a community might make;	Observe and understand varied examples of religious and non-religious worldviews so that they can explain, with reasons, their meanings and significance to individuals and communities;	Explain the religious and non-religious worldviews which they encounter clearly, reasonably and coherently; evaluate them, drawing on a range of introductory level approaches recognised in the study of religion or theology;
Express and Communicate B2. Express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value	Observe and recount different ways of expressing identity and belonging, responding sensitively for themselves;	Understand the challenges of commitment to a community of faith or belief, suggesting why belonging to a community may be valuable, both in the diverse communities being studied and in their own lives;	Observe and interpret a wide range of ways in which commitment and identity are expressed. They develop insightful evaluation and analysis of controversies about commitment to religious and non-religious worldviews, accounting for the impact of diversity within and between communities;
Express and Communicate B3. Appreciate and appraise varied dimensions of religion	Notice and respond sensitively to some similarities between different religious and non-religious worldviews;	Observe and consider different dimensions of religion, so that they can explore and show understanding of similarities and differences between different religions and worldviews;	Consider and evaluate the question: what is religion? Analyse the nature of religion using the main disciplines by which religion is studied;
Gain and deploy skills C1. Find out about and investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding creatively	Explore questions about belonging, meaning and truth so that they can express their own ideas and opinions in response using words, music, art or poetry;	Discuss and present thoughtfully their own and others' views on challenging questions about belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, applying ideas of their own thoughtfully in different forms including (e.g.) reasoning, music, art and poetry;	Explore some of the ultimate questions that are raised by human life in ways that are well-informed, and which invite reasoned personal responses, expressing insights that draw on a wide range of examples including the arts, media and philosophy;
Gain and deploy skills C2. Enquire into what enables different communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all	Find out about and respond with ideas to examples of co-operation between people who are different;	Consider and apply ideas about ways in which diverse communities can live together for the well-being of all, responding thoughtfully to ideas about community, values and respect;	Examine and evaluate issues about community cohesion and respect for all in the light of different perspectives from varied religious and non-religious worldviews;
Gain and deploy skills C3. Articulate beliefs, values and commitments clearly in order to explain reasons why they may be important in their own and other people's lives.	Find out about questions of right and wrong and begin to express their ideas and opinions in response.	Discuss and apply their own and others' ideas about ethical questions, including ideas about what is right and wrong and what is just and fair, and express their own ideas clearly in response.	Explore and express insights into significant moral and ethical questions posed by being human in ways that are well-informed, and which invite personal response, using reasoning which may draw on a range of examples from real life, fiction or other forms of media.

RE Today Syllabus Model A + Additional Units for 2022

Green religion? How and why should religious communities do more to care for the Earth?

This investigation enables pupils to learn in depth about the challenges of climate justice issues and about how different religious and spiritual ways of life can contribute to the urgent human need to stop spoiling the environment and the Earth. Pupils will develop a rich knowledge of examples, concepts, sources of wisdom and authority and practice in different religions and worldviews with regard to climate change, environmental care and building a sustainable future.

What can be done to reduce racism? Can religion help?

This investigation enables pupils to learn in depth from different religious and spiritual ways of life through exploring ideas and examples of what religions do to reduce racism, including for example the work of different religious leaders in promoting respect and the teaching of different sacred texts about human unity.

How do family life and festivals show what matters to Jewish people?

The unit implements the principal aim of RE, which is to engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldviews address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own.

How do people from religious and non-religious communities celebrate key festivals?

This unit offers a multidisciplinary focus using the lens of a sociologist and of a religious studies expert.

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